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Environmental Direct Action: making space for new forms of political community?

Jonathan Mark Anderson.

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

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## Abstract

At the beginning of the 1990s, those who took non-violent direct action in the name of the environment were popularly regarded with disdain. For environmental activists to be described as 'evil savages', 'masked thugs' or 'hate-filled yobs' was commonplace (Freedland, 1999:6), MPs labelled them 'scum' and 'neo-nazis' (Ghazi, 1994:12), and even once-radical groups distanced themselves from direct activists' 'irresponsible' behaviour (see Porritt, 1992:3). By the end of the decade, things had changed. Through protests against a host of 'environmental' abuses including animal exports; the road building programme and the growth of road traffic; house building in green belts; quarrying; and genetically modified crops, the use of direct action has come to be seen as *the* way to articulate political identities and create spaces of resistance. Those politicians and decision-makers who were once seen as defending the public interest, seem increasingly unable to cope with the political lexicon of this new form of popular environmentalism. The labels of 'scum' and 'yobs' have been replaced with heroic caricatures as activists have become champions of a new eco-agenda, 'one of values, culture and societal responsibility' (Vidal, 1994:24). Some have gone so far as to herald environmental activists as, 'the prophets of the coming orthodoxy' (Young, 1997:7).

So how are we to understand Environmental Direct Action (EDA)? How do Environmental Direct Activists (EDA-ers) take and make (political) space? Through examining EDA-ers' acts of resistance, this thesis explores the new spatial practices and geographies of EDA. It examines how activists reclaim space in order to represent their own complex political identities and communities. In order to move beyond the popular caricatures of EDA, this thesis adopts a 'third space' approach to research (after Routledge, 1996). This research method enables the multiple political spaces reclaimed by activists to be integrated into study, illuminating an entangled geography of EDA that includes physical, virtual and media spaces. The third space approach also provides the location for a review of the cultural and political visions of EDA, as well as providing a location to explore new directions for conventional academic positionality.

## Dedications and acknowledgements.

**'My apologies to chance for calling it necessity.  
My apologies to necessity if I'm mistaken after all.  
Don't bear me ill will, speech, that I borrow weighty words,  
Then labour heavily so that they may seem light'.  
(from 'Under one small star', Symborska 1996:91).**

**My gratitude extends to all those with whom I shared time in the many spaces encompassed by this thesis. My professional gratitude extends to Professor Sarah Whatmore who has been a source of help and assistance throughout the course of my study. I also acknowledge the University of Bristol for providing the studentship which funded this research.**

**My personal gratitude also extends to the other residents of 1.14n and Arley Hill, as well as the inhabitants of Craggy Island and Bulgaria, who made the past few years most enjoyable. I would also like to thank Anne for being a vital source of support throughout the write up of this thesis, and my Mum & Dad for always being there.**

Author's declaration.

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other degree.

Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University of Bristol.

The dissertation has not been presented to any other University for examination either in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Signed: 

Date: 15 Nov 00

## **Table of Contents.**

<b>Chapter One.</b>	<b>Introduction.</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Greening political geography.</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>Researching EDA: negotiating third space.</b>	<b>11</b>
	<b>The spaces of EDA.</b>	<b>14</b>
	<b>Thesis outline.</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Chapter Two.</b>	<b>Third Spaces: political resistance and the deficits of liberal democracy.</b>	<b>21</b>
	<b>Democratic deficits (1): the crisis of liberal democratic political representation.</b>	<b>23</b>
	<b>Democratic deficits (2): the exclusive nature of the liberal democratic political community.</b>	<b>25</b>
	<b>Democratic deficits (3): the political spaces of liberal democracy.</b>	<b>28</b>
	<b>Democratic deficits (4): the mainstream media as Fourth estate?</b>	<b>31</b>
	<b>Resistance and liberal democracy or, How do people excluded from liberal democracy become political?</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Chapter Three.</b>	<b>Researching (in) Third spaces: methodological principles &amp; practices.</b>	<b>43</b>
	<b>Methodological principles.</b>	<b>44</b>
	<b>The Third Space.</b>	<b>50</b>
	<b>Methodological practices: a qualitative method.</b>	<b>54</b>
	<b>Methodological practice and multi-sited ethnography.</b>	<b>55</b>
	<b>Methodological practice and the physical spaces of EDA:</b>	
	<b>Overt Research.</b>	<b>55</b>
	<b>Participant Comprehension.</b>	<b>58</b>
	<b>Field Diary.</b>	<b>60</b>
	<b>Methodological practice and the spaces of the mainstream media.</b>	<b>62</b>
	<b>Methodological practice and the spaces of the alternative media:</b>	<b>66</b>
	<b>Virtual spaces and Do-It-Yourself media.</b>	
	<b>Methodological practice: Conclusion.</b>	<b>72</b>

<b>Chapter Four.</b>	<b>The multiple spaces of EDA.</b>	<b>73</b>
	<b>The physical spaces of EDA.</b>	<b>74</b>
	<b>Welcome to 'Craggy Island' &amp; 'Bulgaria'.</b>	<b>76</b>
	<b>The virtual spaces of EDA.</b>	<b>84</b>
	<b>The media spaces of EDA: the mainstream media.</b>	<b>95</b>
	<b>The media spaces of EDA: 'Alternative media'.</b>	<b>106</b>
	<b>The spaces of EDA: conclusion</b>	<b>115</b>
 <b>Chapter Five.</b>	 <b>The spaces of EDA &amp; their vocabularies of environmentalism.</b>	 <b>117</b>
	<b>EDA &amp; the vocabulary of action.</b>	<b>117</b>
	<b>EDA &amp; the vocabulary of ecological theory.</b>	<b>126</b>
	<b>EDA &amp; the vocabulary of myths, stories and poems.</b>	<b>134</b>
	<b>EDA &amp; the vocabulary of rational political theory.</b>	<b>139</b>
 <b>Chapter Six.</b>	 <b>The style and substance of EDA.</b>	 <b>150</b>
	<b>EDA &amp; the liberal democratic backlash.</b>	<b>165</b>
	<b>Conclusion.</b>	<b>176</b>
 <b>Chapter Seven.</b>	 <b>Environmental Direct Action: making space for new forms of political community?</b>	 <b>179</b>
	<b>Reflections on approaching academic research from the third space.</b>	<b>179</b>
	<b>(Third space) geographies of EDA.</b>	<b>183</b>
	<b>The political and cultural practices of EDA as viewed from the third space.</b>	<b>186</b>
	<b>Conclusion: the political significance of EDA.</b>	<b>193</b>
 <b>Bibliography.</b>		 <b>198</b>
 <b>Appendix I.</b>	 <b>Full transcription of field diary.</b>	 <b>217</b>
<b>Appendix II.</b>	<b>History of Ashton Court Quarry Campaign (pre-EDA).</b>	<b>253</b>
<b>Appendix III.</b>	<b>Draft copy of virtual questionnaire.</b>	<b>257</b>
<b>Appendix IV.</b>	<b>Newspaper archive collated by Bristol Friends of the Earth.</b>	<b>263</b>
<b>Appendix V.</b>	<b>Interview transcriptions.</b>	<b>269</b>
<b>Appendix VI.</b>	<b>The environmental sustainability of action camps.</b>	<b>277</b>
<b>Appendix VII.</b>	<b>EDA-ers' view on the translocation of Top Park Field.</b>	<b>279</b>
<b>Appendix VIII.</b>	<b>'Skin shedding' in third space.</b>	<b>280</b>

## List of tables and illustrations.

Chapter One.	Figure 1:1. A map illustrating the geographical spread of EDA across Britain during the summer of 1998.	2
	Figure 1:2. A model of the 'single' and 'multi-sited' vision of EDA.	14
	Figure 1:3. Map of Ashton Court Estate.	15
	Figure 1:4. Excerpt from campaigning material from Save Ashton Court campaign.	17
Chapter Two.	Figure 2:1. Beyond the politics of polarity: a diagrammatical representation of third space.	39
Chapter Three.	Figure 3:1. Beyond the politics of polarity: a representation of third space methodology.	43
	Figure 3:2. Excerpt from one of the virtual questionnaires posted to a range of EDA-ers.	45
	Figure 3:3. The multiple spaces of EDA and the qualitative methods practised in each.	55
	Figure 3:4. The Police promise to 'Stop the Mob' at the imminent RTS party.	63
	Figure 3:5. The Western Daily press article which followed their visit to Craggy Island.	65
	Figure 3:7. Examples of the alternative vocabularies used by EDA-ers.	69
	Figure 3:8. 'Building for Tree Defence'.	71
Chapter Four.	Figure 4:1. The multiple spaces of EDA and the events and activities investigated in each of these throughout the empirical work.	73
	Figure 4:2. An activist map of Ashton Court Estate illustrating the location of the EDA camps.	75
	Figure 4:3. Top Park Field and B.C.C.'s 'wild flower meadow'.	77
	Figure 4:4. Pioneer Aggregates' map of Ashton Court and the wild-flower meadow / donor site.	78

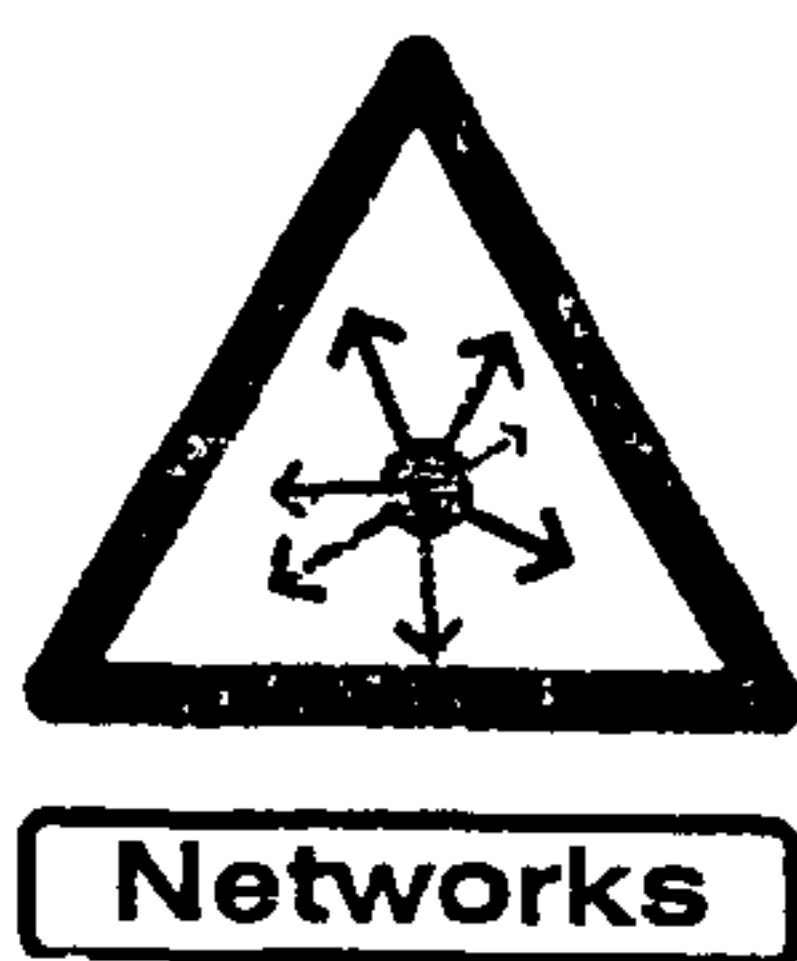


	Figure 4:5. The steel fence erected around the meadow with graffiti: 'parks not profit'.	79
	Figure 4:6. Fence with graffiti: 'you would quarry your granny'.	80
	Figure 4:7. Navigable virtual spaces focused around the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign (local scale).	86
	Figures 4:8, 4:9. Photos of the tunnel 'Dino'.	87
	Figure 4:10. Virtual spaces focused at the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign (regional scale).	89
	Figure 4:11. Navigable virtual spaces around the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign (national scale).	90
	Figure 4:12. The tunnel made front page news.	101
	Figure 4:13. Recuperation & EDA.	105
	Figure 4:14. Typical example of an Undercurrents video sleeve.	112
	Figure 4:15. Images & postcards from Polish Earth First!	113
Chapter Five.	Figure 5:1. 'The brave eco-warrior'.	123
	Figure 5:2. The 'No open coal' Selar campaign / Fantastic Mr Fox.	136
Chapter Six.	Figure 6:1. 'Nad' at Ashton Court, d-locked by the neck to the quarry gates.	155
	Figure 6:2. Evans' 'memory myth' of her time as a child at the Greenham Common peace camp.	168
Chapter Seven.	Figure 7:1. EDA as represented by activists on the 'Interactivism' website.	184
	Figure 7:2. An 'ecological' version of the 'yin/yang' symbol.	190
	Figure 7:3. EDA: an intercourse between destruction and creation.	190
Preface Images.	1) Activist in the spaces of EDA: the physical and the virtual (Caroll, 1998:5). 2) EDA spatiality as network / media / anarchy / analysis (see SchNEWS Survival Handbook, 1999:23/15/78/65 respectively).	



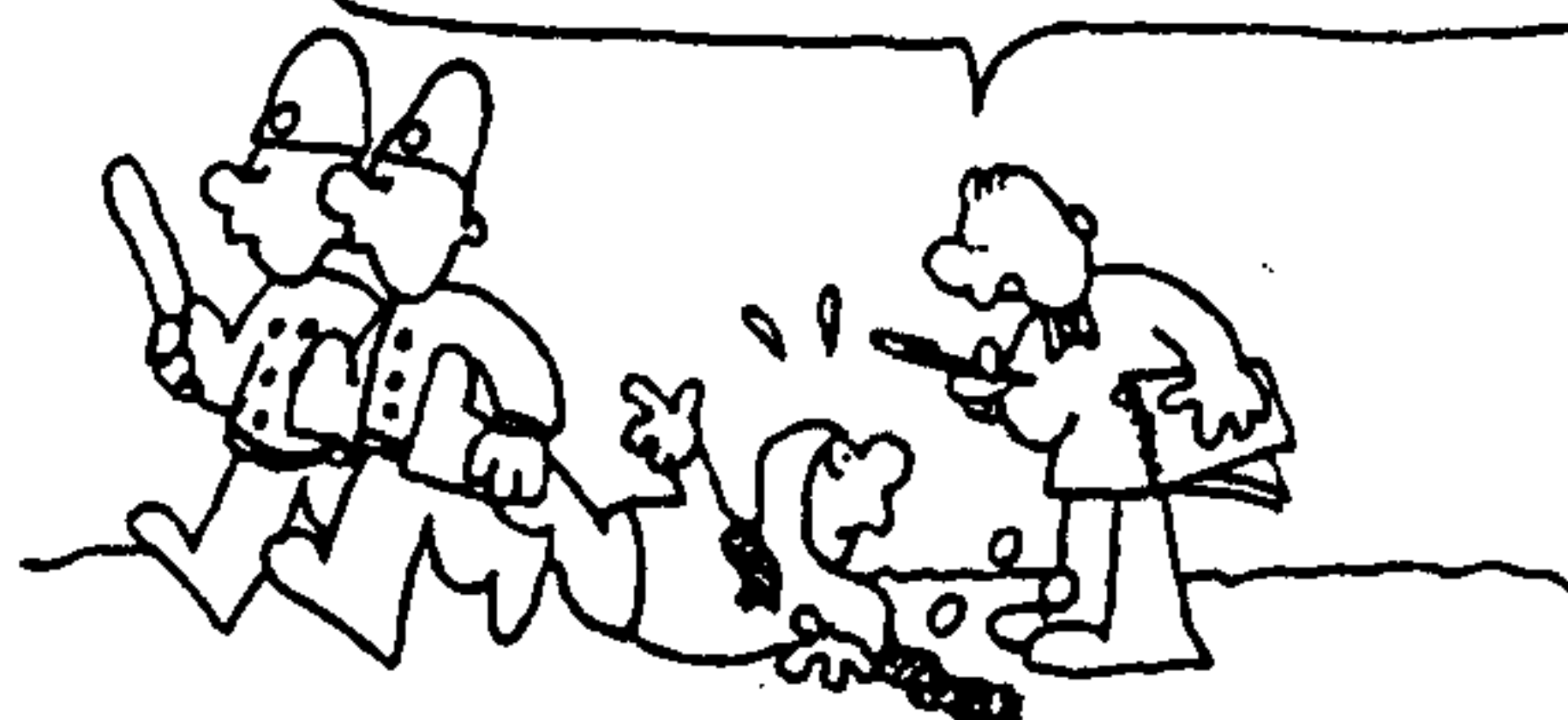






Miss Anna Key!

CAN YOU DECODE THE SYMBOLIC MEANING  
OF YOUR SCARF AND HOOD, PLEASE?  
... IS IT PERHAPS A SUBCONSCIOUS  
REPETITION OF ROBIN HOOD & HIS MERRY MEN?



'INTERROGATING THE MOVEMENT ...'

Chapter One. Introduction.

*As the orange midsummer sun sets and hues of amber radiate into the evening sky, a breeze finds its way through the long grasses and flowers of the meadow. At the far edge of the meadow, amongst the trees, the camps that have been there since the final weeks of winter continue to thrive. With ribbons and banners, music and camaraderie, the camps' inhabitants celebrate the meadow and the values that it represents to them. A local woman watches the sunset, and she begins to cry. She realises time could be running out for the camps, and the meadow itself. In the last few days, men had come to erect a fence around the field of wild flowers. The excavators will follow. A foreign multi-national is to turn the meadow into a quarry - a space for the people will become a space for profit.*

*Later that night, the woman and her friends take down the fence.*

A scene from Ashton Court – 'field' diary (Appendix I:15)

This is protest in Britain in the final decade of the millennium. In this decade, environmental politics has undergone comprehensive and fundamental change. Conventional spaces of political expression, such as petitioning MPs and participating in public inquiries, are now seen to be merely one (optional) ingredient in environmental campaigning. Direct action outside conventional channels has come to be seen as 'the political method logically to be preferred by anyone who regards environmental politics as the ones that matter most' (Young, 1997:6). Environmental Direct Action (EDA) emerged as a recognisable phenomena in the early 1990s with a handful of individuals at the M3 site of Twyford Down, this action became the, 'catalyst...for a largely supine environmental movement' (Fairlie, 1993:4), it inspired similar actions at Solsbury Hill, the M66, Pollok Park in Glasgow, the M11 in London, the Newbury bypass, the A30 at Fairmile, and Manchester's 2nd runway. As an example of its significance, during the summer of 1998 twelve EDA camps existed in Britain, over 50 days of direct action occurred at other sites (SchNEWS, 1999), and by this time the number of EDA organisations, zines and websites had grown to over 500 ([www.schnews.org/archive/news172.html](http://www.schnews.org/archive/news172.html)). The profusion of EDA sites in the summer of 1998 is illustrated in Figure One (Vidal, 1998:11). The magnitude and frequency of Environmental Direct Action has led influential journalists like *The Guardian's* George Monbiot and John Vidal to describe it as, 'the most potent popular force of the 1990s' (Monbiot, in McKay, 1996:127), and even the, 'most significant sustained movement this century' (Monbiot, in Schwartz, 1994:18). EDA has had, they claimed, the effect of changing the environmental mood in this country 'out of all recognition' (Vidal, 1994:24). The effects of direct action can indeed be seen in particular policy areas. In relation to transport policy, the former Conservative Minister for Transport Stephen Norris acknowledged that EDA had contributed to the most, 'profound... sea-change in any sphere of government policy over the last 40 years' (Norris, Junior Minister for Transport, 1992-96, Panorama, 1997) in the move away from road building towards integrated transport schemes. This method of protest has become so, 'difficult and irritating' (Schwartz, 1994:27) for politicians that the Criminal Justice & Public Order Act (1994) was kept, 'as broad as possible' in order to be an, 'effective deterrent' for this method of protest (Senior Whitehall



source, in Ghazi 1994:4).

Figure 1:1. A map illustrating the geographical spread of EDA across Britain during the summer of 1998 (Vidal, 1998:11).



Despite the assertions attributed to EDA, and the effect it has been claimed to have on particular policies, little research has been conducted on it; still less on the spatiality of this form of political action and community. Popular understandings centre on the spectacle of this activism - be it of bulldozer 'diving', tree-sitting or tunnel habitation - and those participating in it - be they 'eco-warriors' or 'Middle England' - rather than the issues concerning the nature of their protest and the implications it has for our understanding of political space (see Capon,



1997, Bellos, 1997a and Jarman, 1997). This thesis seeks to move beyond the spectacular by exploring the geography and spatial practices of EDA. Such a task can be aided by engaging with a number of academic debates.

As Roszak (1989:10) suggests, the state of the environment can be seen to be both a symptom and a symbol of the state of health of a society. Over this century, both the incidence and frequency of environmental destruction have accelerated as human activity has come to affect almost every facet of the planetary biosphere. In this context, as Keman notes, it is increasingly doubtful whether, 'liberal democracies are still capable, within the confines of the nation-state, of coping with these problems by means of public regulation and related policy-making' (1996:preface). The failure of liberal democratic institutions to manage the environment effectively has been much debated (see for example, Doherty & de Geus, 1996, and Johnston, 1989), but these discussions are neatly summarised by Eckersley;

'The central problem with the Liberal Democratic state is that it systematically under-represents ecological concerns. It does this in two ways. First, it represents only the citizens of territorially bounded political communities and therefore has no strong incentive not to externalise ecological costs, both spatially and temporally. In this respect, it is systematically biased against the interests of 'non-citizens', or what might be called the 'new environmental constituency', that is, all those who may be seriously affected by environmental decisions made within the polity but who cannot vote or otherwise participate in the political deliberations and decisions of the polity (I have in mind here non-compatriots, non-human species and future generations). The second problem with the Liberal Democratic state is that it provides very limited opportunities for such vicarious representation; indeed it systematically under-represents not only the interests of non-citizens, but also the ecological welfare of its own citizens.

The upshot is that the longer-term public interest in environmental protection is systematically traded off against the more immediate demands of capital (and sometimes labour). This process (and expectation) of trade-off has been inscribed into the state agencies and decision rules which govern environmental decision-making' (Eckersley, 1996:214).

In other words, liberal democracy fails on two counts. Firstly by legitimating the dominant interests of capital in the majority of political decisions, and secondly, by dissipating potential resistance to this bias by denying its citizens an effective political voice. This is the result of delimiting the means of representation in the political sphere such that citizens are constrained in terms of *how* they can voice dissent and *who* can make their voice heard. From this perspective conventional political spaces afford little room for environmental protection, and environmental advocacy shifts to 'outside' channels and sites. The adoption of direct action can perhaps be seen to be indicative of the growing disjuncture between the premises and practices of liberal democratic states, and the complex political identities and communities of its citizens. If the environment is indeed both a symptom and symbol of the state of health of society, EDA can perhaps be seen, in Beck's terms, as the public's critical reflection of the negative consequences of 'late modernity'. From this perspective ecological crises are now not simply, 'unseen side effects of industrial production' but have evolved into a 'profound institutional crisis of

industrial society itself' (1994:8).

Critiques of liberal democracy and Beck's 'Risk Society' thesis demand a major re-evaluation of notions of political community, identity and action with regard to the new environmental context. However, they also illustrate that the direction in which this re-evaluation should proceed is not so self-evident. For some, like Mouffe (1992), liberal democracy should be 'radicalised' in order to re-implement procedural neutrality and thus reflect public environmental concern. For others a 'double democratisation' is needed to revitalise civil society in relation to the state (Christoff, 1996, and Smith, 1990), or some form of citizenship composed which instils an ethic of environmental responsibility to help guide political decisions (Keane, 1988). Although these approaches do not acknowledge the specificities of EDA in particular, a neglect reciprocated by the commentaries emanating from the direct action movement that do not acknowledge such academic proposals, a common language can be identified between the two. This centres on the need to democratise political decision-making and to call professional elites and 'experts' to account in this process. Watts describes this as a common, 'emphasis on local knowledges and [a] call for access to and control over local resources (or democratisation broadly put) [and this] courses through environmental struggles' (1998:247).

In this sense, both academic and activist circles seem to recognise that at the end of the twentieth century environmental issues have come to signify a widespread sense that, 'the whole Enlightenment project – [liberal] democratic politics and rational discourse, the political and scientific strands which have gone together – is now falling apart and alternative ways are being invoked' (Bate, in Wallace, 1994:15). Amongst the ruins, urgent calls proliferate for a new democratic plurality in which diverse cultures are free to develop in their own ways (after Gray, 1999:36). In this context, this thesis conceptualises Environmental Direct Action as one impulse within this new 'post' modern way of 'doing' politics. As a reaction to the politicisation of the environment in recent decades, as well as the ineffective ways of dealing with the ecological crisis through conventional channels, EDA takes its inspiration from a range of British and international resistance movements to reinvent radical forms of political participation and action. In thinking about this new form of 'autopoietic' politics (Escobar, 1995), a whole raft of questions concerning political community, identity and action are raised. How does EDA influence conventional notions of political space? How does, for example, EDA spatially manifest its environmental politics? How do campaigning communities configure effective spaces of protest and action, and what technological and discursive mediators give and hold these communities in place? What relations between human and non-human communities do EDA-ers seek to advance, and how do activists perform these relations? How do the spatial practices of EDA challenge the conventional spaces of liberal democratic politics – are activists concerned with radicalising liberal democracy, or in circumventing it? As one manifestation of a new way of 'doing' politics, EDA thus calls into question our current understanding of political space and



resistance. Its geography and spatial practices influence our notions of the local and the global, and how we understand the importance of political space associated with the liberal democratic and nation state. It is these issues that this thesis attempts to explore, and in doing so hopes to contribute to an understanding of EDA and its significance to the politics and organisation of late-modern society.

### Greening political geography.

*'The essence of green politics requires a new space and paradigm for its expression'*  
(Seward, 1996:82).

Geography plays a crucial role in the understanding of political resistance, and especially EDA. Direct action can be seen as an attempt to create new spaces in which campaigners are able to practice alternative political identities and enact their political visions. The establishment of spaces that are, to some degree, outside the conventional system of political order, or in the words of Escobar (1995), are 'decentred autonomous spaces', become crucial to this end. McKay, an environmental activist turned researcher, echoes the importance of space; he states,

'one central way in which cultures of resistance define themselves against the culture of the majority is through the construction of their own zones, their own spaces. These can be distinguished in part through the subcultural elements of music, style, or favoured drugs, but space itself is vital' (1996:7).

In environmental conflicts specifically, space becomes both a metaphorical and material site of struggle. In specific cases, environmental campaigns reaffirm notions of locality through explicitly grounding a general issue in a particular piece of land that is under threat. This space thus becomes indirectly politicised through the differing claims and significances attached to it. On one level, therefore, EDA comprehensively politicises space through the (temporary) occupation of particular sites; in the words of Keith & Pile (1997:20), Environmental Direct Action 'takes place'. However, EDA not only reaffirms notions of locality, but also complicates them. For example, EDA is not only practiced at a local site by those living in close proximity to the area, but also by those from farther afield that deem this site to be their 'locality' too. EDA thus complicates notions of political space in terms of its location, structure and relations with the wider political fabric; in other words, EDA can be said to do more than simply 'take place'. Spaces of EDA are not fully formed political arenas that exist passively for activists to take and stake their claim within. In many cases, EDA-ers have to 'make' (political) space. Through their practices, activists create, shape and structure political space and, through doing so, influence the geography of political action and community.

As a discipline Geography has contributed to debates on the spaces of political action in a number of useful ways. Discussions have centred on the ways in which access to, and control over space become delimited, and the effects this management has upon particular political

Identities and communities. Such discussions become focused on notions of the 'public' and 'private', on configurations of property rights ('over-spilling' into the explicit spatial arena of (post)colonial studies), as well as on the notion of the 'commons'. Each of these debates offer useful perspectives for EDA as they illustrate the interdependent relations between space, the modes of political organisation that hold power and, by extension, the hegemonic cultural practices from which these politics emanate. I will briefly look at each of these debates in turn.

*'Public spaces are absolutely essential to the functioning of democratic politics (Fraser, 1990).*

Public space is central to thinking about places of political action. As Fraser (above) advises, the existence of public space not only facilitates, but also is absolutely essential to, the functioning of democratic politics. By having access to public space, social groups have the opportunity to organise and articulate their political messages and identities, and thus gain representation in the political realm. Due to their ability to stake their claim in public space, a political movement can become a visible and legitimate part of the polity (after Mitchell, 1995). However, Mitchell (1995) also informs us of the inherent risk in such a functioning of public space. Through the articulation of counter hegemonic political and/or cultural identities, threats of disorder become a recurring theme within public space. As Lefebvre (1991) has discussed (and Chapter Two will outline in further detail), as a consequence of this risk political elites have frequently sought to plan and control the public arena. This move to 'make safe' public space in effect curtails its democratic potential, as Davis (1992:155) states, 'the universal consequence of the crusade to secure the city is the destruction of any truly democratic space'. The removal or emaciation of public space through planning controls and the creation of public space simulacra changes the distinction between the 'public' and the 'private' both in terms of space, and in terms of the relevant public that now enjoy political representation. Some groups have access to the public spaces as inscribed by the state, whilst others become marginalised and their political voice silenced (see Chapter Two). Consequently, these groups are no longer able to mobilise in public space, or stake their claim to be a legitimate section of the polity. The struggle for political representation and the articulation of counter-hegemonic political identities thus becomes manifest geographically through the (re)creation of public spaces in innovative ways (for example, through the use of new technologies, e.g the Internet / cyberspace (see Crang, et al, 1999), or the subversion of existing uses of space). It is these latter spatial activities that have become definitive of EDA. Through the inability of environmental advocates to gain political representation in the public spaces of liberal democracy, EDA-ers have articulated their political identities in other arenas. Activists have created new political spaces through practising their politics directly in threatened environmental areas (by, for example, standing in front of bulldozers), they have exploited virtual spaces through networking and organising action through the Internet, whilst also staking out space for their political identities

in the mainstream and alternative media. EDA can therefore be illuminated by the debate on public spaces, activists can be seen to be taking and making space in order to represent their own political visions. EDA also furthers the debate on the nature of public space through its creation of new arenas for political expression, be they media-related, virtual or actual.

*'The land was the essence of being. If you took away the land, you took away everything' (Howkins, 1999).*

Who enjoys access to space and the political power that is associated with it has also been explored in relation to property rights. As Goldman states,

'although the initiatives from social movements, as well as states and firms, are quite disparate, the common focus is on the question of property rights - rights to land, forests, yields, burial grounds, seeds, intellectual property, ground and surface water, radiowaves, ecosystems, gene transfers, underground materials, urban space, the village well and pastoral grazing. Whoever controls property rights controls the processes of resource extraction and environmental change. Different social actors are fighting for different property rights: resource dependent communities for sustenance and culturally meaningful practices, corporations for commodity and surplus value production and state agencies for tax revenues and increased jurisdiction - all are fighting for rights to environments on which their power depends' (1988:2).

Control over space is thus the platform from which a plethora of associated powers can be brokered. How land is used and by whom can be decided, whilst what is grown, built or extracted can also be controlled. In this way, particular social constructions of the environment and 'value' can be valorised through actual practice, and competing practices and values marginalised or consigned to history. From this perspective, it can be seen that the dominant conceptions of the environment are 'modern' or 'technocratic' (see O'Riordan, 1981) in nature. As Tilley (1994:20) describes, conceptions of nature that characterised pre-modern cultures - i.e. with space viewed as sanctified, embodying cosmology and myth and sedimented with meaning for its inhabitants - have been replaced with cultural notions that focus on utilitarian economic values, and conceptions of space as 'free' for instrumental use and control for and by human beings. In relation to EDA therefore, this thesis investigates not only how and where EDA-ers 'take' place, but also what they then 'make' of it. How do, for example, activists perceive the environment in relation to modern, or pre-modern cultural notions, and to what degree are 'post' modern environmental views transcending the existing binaries in the spaces of EDA? Furthermore, this thesis will investigate how these environmental views are practiced by EDA-ers within the spaces of action, how they shape these spaces, and how they structure the creation of wider communities of EDA.

Space as a site of struggle between competing political and cultural philosophies is clearly illustrated in (post)colonial literature. As Loomba (1998:2) suggests, colonialism can be defined as, 'the conquest and control of other people's land and goods'. Although traditionally



a struggle between 'foreign powers' and 'indigenous peoples', colonialism can occur between contrasting cultures within the same nation state. Whatever spatial or historic context is chosen, colonisation represents a displacement (often oppressive and/or violent) of one group of social actors by another. Jackson & Penrose (1983) argue that the establishment of patterns of control and oppression by settler groups over indigenous populations nearly always entail a complete cultural dominance of the core group, and the exclusion of native peoples from the social boundaries of the new 'nations'. The new elites gain control over land and introduce their own form of control and organisation that reflects their cultural preferences. In the modern age, as Fenster & Yiftachel (1997) suggest, these preferences focus on 'nation building' and 'economic development'. 'Indigenous' modes of organisation, which generally speaking may have been 'pre-modern' in nature, would thus have been overturned. This perspective is of use to our understanding of EDA as many activists have adopted the language of indigenelty to identify themselves as a political community, describing themselves, for example, as 'Indigenous Englanders' (Vidal, 1994). Some EDA-ers have also borrowed rhetoric and practice from 'tribal' cultures in order to frame their activities – leading to some commentators to label their practices as some form of 'DIY' (or 'Do It Yourself') Culture' (see McKay, 1998). This thesis uses the insights from (post)colonial theory to further inform us on the struggle for space that is central to EDA. By exploring the cultural and political values of EDA we can assess the extent to which it represents a contrast to dominant modern culture. We can also examine the methods adopted by the dominant culture to control and colonise EDA, as well as vice versa. These insights help us to understand how EDA's spatial practices combine with and in turn influence terms such as 'indigenous'. This interaction also illuminates further EDA's opposition to the dominant culture, and the extent to which it forms a coherent alternative to it.

*'Today, the commons has become a central metaphor for ecological politics'*  
(Goldman, 1998:3).

One example of the spatial, and associated political, displacement of one mode of cultural organisation by another has been documented in geographical literature in terms of the 'commons'. The 'commons' are areas of land lying outside that enclosed by private property and/or national sovereign territory. This common land fulfils an 'over-spill' function for the human population, providing amenities - such as space for animal grazing, the hunting of game, collection of plants, or other materials - that private plots can not. Equally, this land constitutes an 'over-spill' for more 'wild' species, providing foraging grounds for fauna that complement the biological diversity of the ecosystem. Although the conditions for using this 'in-between' land do not fall within the rigid binaries of 'public' and 'private', they are not a 'free-for-all' (see Berkes, 1989). The ideal behind the commons is that management of space is best achieved through a social contract with the local community, as Goldman states, 'the ideal behind the metaphor is that local communities are in the best position to decide for themselves

how to manage natural environments' (1998:8). As Snyder (1990:30) suggests, the commons not only refers to specific land, but also, 'the traditional community institution that defines the rights and obligations of those who use it, with penalties for lapses'. 'Commons' regimes thus provide another useful illustration of the [con]fused nature of land use and political and cultural organisation. In the case of the commons, as *The Ecologist* (1993) suggests, local communities have common access to and common power over land, regulated by local needs and understanding of local ecological niches. As *The Ecologist* (1993:20) goes on to inform us, however, this localised control is undermined through processes of community integration into the global social fabric. In this way, systems of commons rights change through a process of interaction with spatially disparate communities from the outside world, they become not simply local, or global. Reflecting the case of property rights and (post)colonial studies, the interaction of political powers in this way is both influenced by, and in turn effects the nature of (political) space. In the case of the commons, the influence of the global market economy has had the effect of disassembling many local-based political communities and cultures through undermining existing land uses, access and organisation. Commons regimes are thus replaced with new structures of political order and community that serve new cultural preferences. Depending on these cultural preferences commons regimes are seen as, 'either cause or antidote of ecological degradation' (Goldman, 1998:2). In terms of EDA, direct activists have explicitly referred to the notion of common property and the enclosure of commons regimes. For example;

'We are...working with other communities around Britain which are trying to save common spaces or reclaim land for the community. Our role is to highlight ordinary people's exclusion not only from the land itself but also from the decision-making processes affecting it' (This Land Is Ours, <http://www.oneworld.org/tlio>).

'What we had, what was our common property, has been enclosed - has been annexed by a small number of people for their benefit. And ever since this process of enclosure started, people, ordinary people, who had lost their resources - be those resources land, be they political power, be they culture, religion or psyche - fought the enclosers' (Monblot, This Land Is Ours, <http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/guest/tribe/george2.html>).

EDA can thus be seen to place itself within the historical struggle for land access and control by local communities, a struggle that perhaps dates back to the Levellers and beyond. Through engaging with this struggle, EDA-ers can be seen to favour some form of commons regime as an antidote to environmental degradation. Commons debates can thus help to illuminate EDA, providing one context in which the spatial practices of EDA are attempting to reclaim forms of local control and management in the increasingly global political arena.

To summarise, the academic debates outlined above all identify the linkages between geographical space, the type of political organisation that orders this space, and the cultural mode from which this politics emanates. From these perspectives, space can be seen to be a crucial symbol of political representation and power, or perhaps more importantly, the lack of it. The increase of environmental destruction in the pursuit of cultural preferences such as 'progress' and 'development' has thus become symbolic of the democratic deficit apparent in liberal democracy. Environmental Direct Activists have entered the political debate by rejecting conventional political channels and their associated democratic deficits, and creating their own forms of political space in order to articulate their opposition. This opposition is multi-faceted; for example, activists use their newly formed political space to critique the way in which the environment is treated by the dominant political system;

'There is a common perception that... the environment is nothing to do with how society is run, that it is something remote and 'out there', somewhere to drive to for the day, something that just happens to be suffering because of the way we live. That we work in repetitive, meaningless jobs and that this is organised for the sake of profit is taken for granted, and remains somehow unconnected. This separation and presentation of the ecological crisis as unconnected to other forms of exploitation only serves the interests of business and state, and needs to be overcome if society is to survive' (Voices from Earth First!, 1997:9).

This oppositional space is also used to critique the political system's ability to improve the state of society and nature;

'Working for change within the system, or voting for a lesser evil, [is] pointless and disempowering' (Voices from Earth First!, 1997:11),  
'The only medicine to this malaise of continuing disillusionment is coming from those outside the strait jacket of parliamentary politics' (Squall, 1998:4),  
'We laugh contemptuously at the naive believer in 'liberal democracy'' (Booth, in Green Anarchist 1996:22),

and this space is used to place EDA's opposition within an historical context that links together many waves of counter-cultural resistance;

'The fight we're engaged in has been going on for a thousand years. [It] began with the harrowing of the North, when William the Conqueror repressed the people who had risen against him and risen against the fact that he'd divided the whole of Britain among a hundred and eighty barons. It continued through the Peasants' Revolt when in 1381, one hundred thousand people took London, protesting against the continued removal of their rights - their enslavement on what were their own lands - by the new lords of the land. It continued in every century, right up till today. But it has never had the capacity to produce such vast and sweeping change as our movement has right now. And the Criminal Justice Bill, far from bringing us to an end, is exactly what's going to make us stronger than ever before. In 1647...The Levellers were people who started off simply as the rural dispossessed, and their intention was to level the land by pulling down the fences - by pulling down the hedges which had divided them from the property that was theirs, which was their rightful property, and by retaking the places



that had been taken from them by the land lords, by the barons, by the aristocrats of Britain. But they soon began to extend these ideas from the levelling of the land and the reclamation of the land as a common resource, to the levelling of society' (<http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/guest/tribe/george2.html>).

This thesis interrogates the geography and spatial practices of Environmental Direct Action. It looks at the new and innovative ways EDA takes and makes political space. Through doing so, this thesis is able to comment on the challenge EDA represents to the modern state and its political assemblage, as well as the wider culture of 'late-modernity'. In short, this thesis contributes to our understanding of the ways in which new 'post-modern' ways of doing politics are shaping our conceptions of the spatiality of political action and community.

### Researching EDA: negotiating third space.

As I have suggested, EDA exemplifies a move away from dominant political institutions and practices, and towards more 'democratic' and 'plural' spaces of political association and activity. I begin my investigation into the ways EDA seeks to adapt dominant spaces of 'democratic' politics by explaining the concepts and methods used by this thesis to gain an understanding of these new 'post' modern pluralities.

I decided that in order to gain an understanding of the new forms of political space created by EDA, a mode of investigation had to be adopted that accounted for the innovations characteristic of EDA. I did not want this thesis to venture into spaces of activism with unwieldy and inappropriate methodological baggage that would ignore, silence or mistranslate EDA. The innovative shifts that characterise EDA I felt necessitated a parallel rethinking of the conceptualisation of the geographies of environmental politics, and the reconsideration of research methodologies appropriate to understanding these changes. Thus in order to reflect developments in the wider community, I attempted to adopt more 'democratic' research practice. Keith (1992) and Blomley (1994), amongst others, recognise the importance of creating space for pertinent research methods within the academic field. Keith has identified the need to, 'leave spaces for the accountable plurality of legitimate textual strategies' (Keith 1992:566), whilst Blomley searches for, 'an alternative model, ...that navigates between the opposed perils of academic elitism and political disengagement. [He asks] how can we contribute without reinforcing the hierarchies of privilege?' (Blomley, 1994:385).

My research position for this thesis, which influenced my methodological approach throughout, sought to be sensitive to the different strategies, languages and meanings of the various actors involved. In the spirit of the re-inscription of democratic plurality into research, I wanted to integrate the voices, spaces and actions of activists into the research mix, as well as those connected with academia. It was hoped that the combination of activist and academic positions would have an effect not only in understanding the subject area, but also in moving beyond the

traditional conceptions of 'academic' and 'activist'. This combination I hoped would contribute in a small way to the destabilisation of dominant stereotypes such as 'privileged expert' and 'non-expert', as well opening up the geographical account to voices and modes of articulation that are traditionally left out of academic investigation. In much the same way as Game & Metcalfe (1996) argue for the integration of differing forms of comprehension into sociology through instilling a 'passionate' element into research, this thesis aims to explore new analytical spaces through the destabilisation of other apparently opposing binary stereotypes (notably of academic and activist, and the various knowledges that each bring to an issue).

I found it useful to think about such a move in terms of what Gramsci calls the 'organic intellectual' – a thinker who is also a do-er, a 'scientist' and an 'activist', someone who is a literate inhabitant of a number of community spaces at any one time (see Luke 1997). This configuration of positionality resonated with my own situation, as an interested and sometime active individual in environmental campaigns. As a result of this configuration, individuals cannot be situated purely in one location or another, thus their (con)fused positionality reflects the ambiguous and often paradoxical nature of reality. Following work by Bhabha (1994), Soja (1996), and Pile (1997), Routledge (1996) has attempted to negotiate a similar position between the role of activist and geographer through the use of an explicitly spatial metaphor - 'third space'. By (re)positioning oneself between the binary of 'pure' academic and activist, Routledge attempts to be able to gain a perspective from which the relations between the personal, the textual and the political can be addressed. From this position, Routledge suggests it is possible to oscillate between the binary positions and gain an understanding that enables a critical reflection of both; a location where, 'neither site, role, or representation holds sway, where one continually subverts the meaning of the other' (Routledge, 1996:400). Through making positionality an explicit factor in the research approach, issues regarding subjectivity, representation and power rise to the forefront of investigation, and can be integrated into the research mix. Through interweaving the prevailing dual positions, insights can be gained that the resolute situatedness in one location could not offer; in this way differing representations of reality can be invoked that, although not necessarily coherent, reflect the perspectives held by the social actors involved. Negotiating a third space thus allows differing and conflicting conceptions of political space to be understood, as well as in itself creating a new 'in-between' space where forms of collaboration can occur between political actors. As a result, the negotiation of third space also contributes to the debate on 'late-modernity', through establishing a new ambiguous space from which individuals can be political.

Negotiating a position to study EDA not only involved addressing the roles of academic and activist, but also required the critical engagement with other major 'voices' that contribute to the popular understanding of the subject. The mass media play a central role in this area. As the media are an 'integral part of popular culture' and are, 'an essential element in moulding individual and social experience of the world and in shaping the relationship between people

and place' (Burgess and Gold, 1985:1), this study had to acknowledge not only media driven accounts of EDA, but also the problems inherent in such accounts. The way in which journalistic agendas explicitly or implicitly influence the reportage of events needed to be addressed, as well as the ways in which these agendas contribute to popular images and caricatures of activists, be they positive or negative. The potential for activists to 'orchestrate' campaigns in order to garner media coverage also needed to be fully addressed. It was imperative therefore to locate the popular commentaries of EDA as an actual part of the direct action phenomenon itself, as it was only through a critical appraisal using this composite view that any sort of representative picture could be established.

Locating the media as part of the phenomenon of EDA was achieved through integrating media voices into the arena of the third space. It was hoped that this integration would contribute to the new geography of EDA through involving all the networks of communication, commentary and critique that combine together to characterise Environmental Direct Action. In this way, moves were made away from notions of political space in relation to EDA that focus on distinct, isolated protest sites, and towards a broader vision that places resistance strategies within the spatial framework of society and culture.

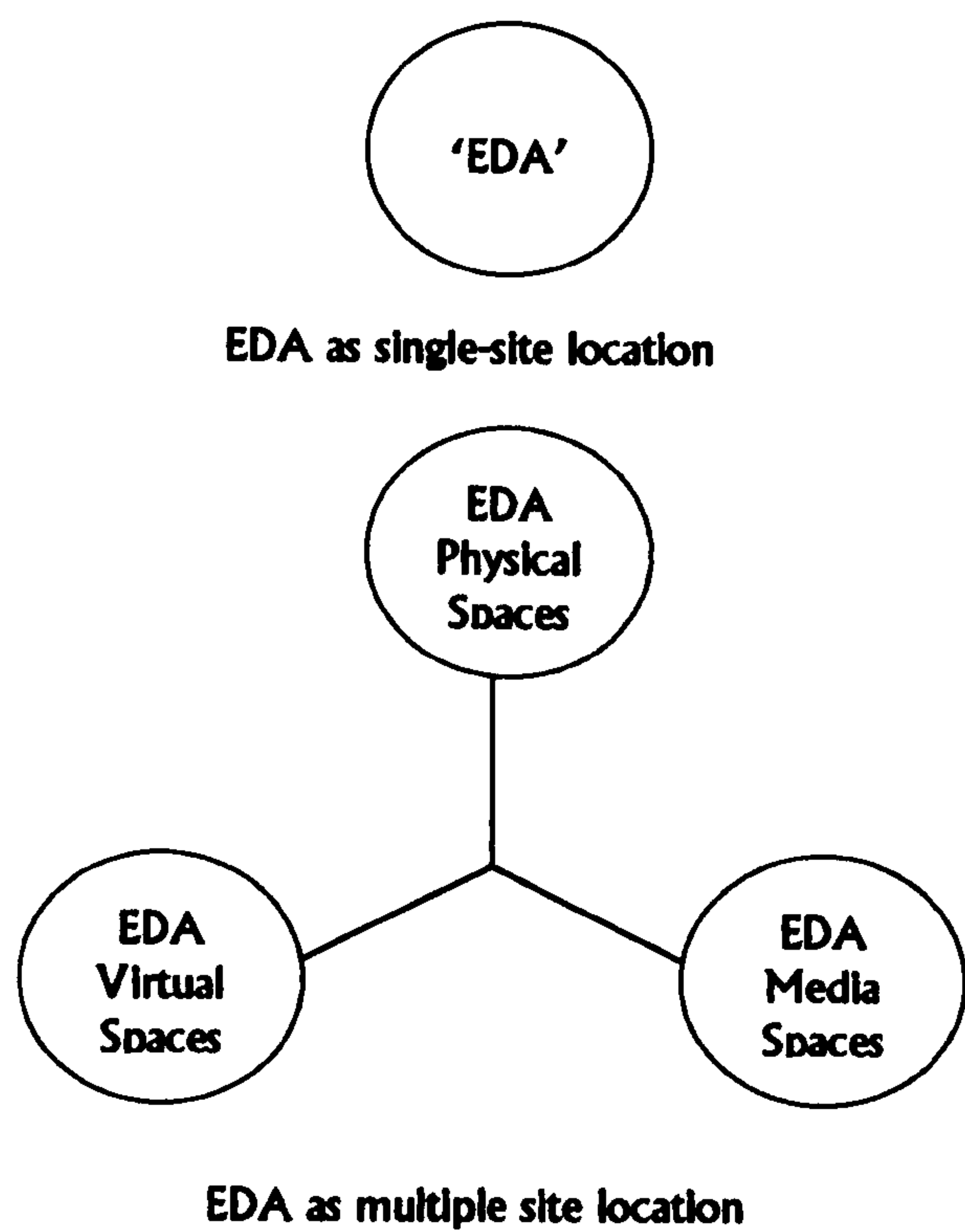
The spaces of EDA.

The negotiation of third space and the move towards a broader vision of the political spaces of EDA was carried through the methodological approach by focusing on a multi-sited research study (after Marcus, 1995). In the words of Marcus, a multi-sited approach,

‘moves away from [a] conventional single-site location...to multiple sites of observation and participation that cross-cut dichotomies such as the ‘local’ and the ‘global’, the ‘lifeworld’ and the ‘system’” (1995:95).

Instead of spatially distinct settlements - the most visible pieces of the EDA iceberg, the multi-sited study for this thesis becomes the new spatial envelopes of the actual (and virtual) spaces of EDA. In other words, the research focuses on a multi-sited ethnography, comprising the actual protest location, the associated material sites that supported the action, as well as the Internet and media sites that connected the campaign to particular activist, as well as broader public, arenas beyond the local scale, as outlined in Figure 1:2.

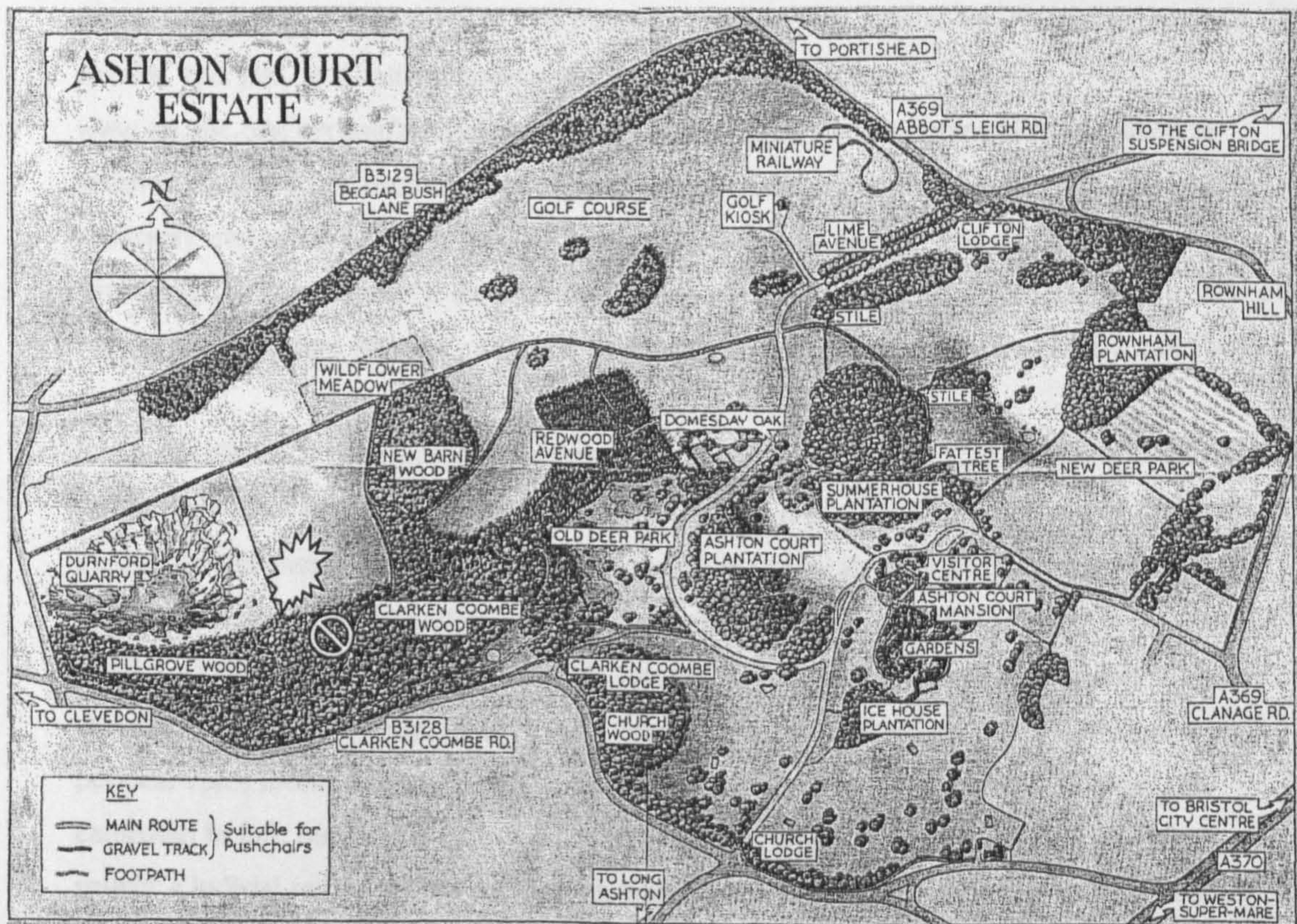
Figure 1:2. A model of the ‘single’ and ‘multi-sited’ vision of EDA.





An archetypal case study was chosen to 'centre' this multi-sited research approach, namely the Anti-Quarry campaign at Ashton Court near Bristol. Figure 1:3 illustrates the Estate at Ashton Court, and prefaces a brief introduction to the Estate itself and the development of the anti-quarry campaign.

Figure 1:3. Map of Ashton Court Estate.



Key to 1:3.



Location of EDA camps



Site of quarry extension / wild flower meadow

Ashton Court Estate is an historic country park of wood and grassland, covering 850 acres on the outskirts of Bristol. The estate has existed in its current form since its purchase by wealthy Bristol merchant John Smyth in 1545. The Estate was passed down through the Smyth family over the centuries, until it was bequeathed to the people of the city in the 1950s. Bristol City Council now manages the Estate on behalf of the local people, their control is premised upon the agreement that, 'no portion of the Park should be set aside for...site works which would prejudice the citizens' enjoyment'<sup>1</sup>. As a consequence, Ashton Court estate caters for many of the local peoples' recreational needs, including golf, cycling, horse riding, and rambling, as well as being the location for annual community music, as well as kite, festivals.

<sup>1</sup> As stated in the 'Ashton Court [Anti] Quarry Campaign' literature (see <http://www.gn.apc.org/cycling/ashtoncourt.html>).



In the mid-1980s, Bristol City Council granted the Australian multinational Pioneer Aggregates the option to extend Durnford Quarry, a pre-existing site located on the periphery of the park (see Figure 1:3). This option meant that the BCC would, 'use their best endeavours' to support any planning application made by Pioneer to quarry within Ashton Court (see Appendix II). In 1994, Pioneer attempted to realise this planning option and applied to quarry thirty acres within the park. If successful, this extension would involve the destruction of a wild flower meadow (see Figure 1:3). This meadow provided the habitat for, 'many uncommon species' and was, 'a grassland community of regional importance' (from [www.gn.apc.org/cycling/ashtoncourt.html](http://www.gn.apc.org/cycling/ashtoncourt.html)); it was home to rare botanical species such as green-winged and bee orchids, broomrape, yellow rattle and adders' tongue fern. Skylarks reputedly nested on it, and it was the foraging location for badgers and six varieties of bats (including the rare 'Leisler'). As such the meadow enjoyed the official designation of a 'Site of Nature Conservation Interest', and was nominally protected under the Avon Structure Plan.

It was decided that the campaign against the extension of Durnford Quarry was appropriate for use as the centre of this research's multi-sited study as it provided a microcosm of the issues of interest to this thesis. As Figure 1.4 illustrates, to many locals Ashton Court exemplified the lack of access and representation that environmentally concerned citizens enjoy in the spaces of politics ascribed by the liberal democratic system. A conventional campaign against the quarry extension was made by a number of local groups, but they systematically failed to get their political voice listened to and acted upon through these routes. Appendix II outlines this campaign in full, but brief details are illustrative here. When, for example, two Bristollans sought a judicial review to the decision to grant Pioneer planning permission a court hearing pronounced that since the two in question were merely citizens of Bristol they had no clear property or financial right over the meadow. As a result they did not have sufficient legal status to object to the Council's decision. Furthermore, when a local councillor was questioned over the public's right to question the destiny of Ashton Court he replied;

'In regard of the determination of a planning issue, even if 99% of the [Bristol] population don't want it [in this case the quarry extension] that is not a planning reason for refusal... that is the law' (Councillor Bibb, quoted in *This is it!* 1999:3).

The conventional campaign against the quarry extension led many to question individuals' capacity to have a say in the political system, as one activist stated;

'The ongoing battle to save Top Park Field has thrown up a whole range of issues, one of which is the rights of the public in a supposedly democratic society. It would seem that the planning system and the legal system have evolved with the rights of business, landowners and developers in mind. The rights of the rest of the population seem to be of minimal importance' (<http://www.gn.apc.org/cycling/ashtoncourt/democracy.html>).

Ashton Court also highlighted the lack of control that local people enjoy over local environments and resources. The decision to displace a local amenity was eventually made by a county, rather than the local city council, and directly benefited not the local population, but an Australian corporation. The disenfranchisement felt by many locals for the liberal democratic spaces of politics was tangible, and fuelled speculation over the legitimacy and accountability of conventional decision-making;

'The issue has less to do with Pioneer's actions (an inherently local company, with local concerns - in Australia) than the Council's allowing for future quarrying to be given carte blanche years before it was to happen...all its business should be made public...but the lack of publication of the terms of the lease is suggestive of underhand dealing' (This is it! 1999:2).



Ashton Court is a public park on the western edge of Bristol, just across the Clifton Suspension Bridge. It was bought by the city council in 1959, for the enjoyment of the people of Bristol.

The initial purchase agreement in 1959 stated that the estate would be used as a public open space for the benefit of the people of Bristol. The planning committee at the time stated that "no portion of the Park should be set aside for ... site works which would prejudice the citizens' enjoyment or detract from its value as a recreational ground".

Now the council has leased 20 acres of public parkland at the top end of the Estate to Pioneer Aggregates, an Australian multinational. Pioneer want to expand their Durnford Quarry, and have been given planning permission, against the wishes of local people

Owned by the people of Bristol, enjoyed by the people of Bristol, an important part of Bristol's green lungs. So what say do the people of Bristol have in the development of Ashton Court?

From <http://www.gn.apc.org/cycling/ashtoncourt.html>

Figure 1:4. Excerpt from campaigning material from the Save Ashton Court Campaign.

The lack of public control over a resource that was perceived locally to be a 'commons' (it was managed for the 'enjoyment of the people of Bristol') resulted in activists deciding to adopt direct action tactics to 'take place' at Ashton Court. Through these means they attempted to not only politicise the meadow through making it the focus of the struggle to get alternative political identities articulated, but also to physically stop the destruction of the meadow itself. Inherent within direct action 'taking place' at Ashton Court, new political space was created and organised by autonomous individuals, outside the parameters of public and private as delineated by liberal democracy (a third space of politics, if you like, see Chapter Two). This space served as a focus for the establishment of a (temporary) political community, which became part of a larger EDA network operating in a variety of geographical and media spaces. The direct action campaign at Ashton Court lasted for approximately twelve months, beginning in late February 1998. My involvement in the protest took in the whole of this period. In order to gain a resonant understanding of the community study, appropriate methodologies were adopted in each political space investigated. At the camps at Ashton Court, an overt research position was taken, and 'participant comprehension' adopted to enable full involvement in activism. Experience was gained not only of the campaign at Ashton Court, but also in the wider networks and temporary actions linked to the protest (for example in the West Country Activist gatherings, and local Reclaim the Streets parties). Analysis was also made of this wider protest community through material disseminated to protest communities specifically, but also to the public in general. This material came in the form of newsletters, oral narratives, videos and Internet websites. The media was integrated into the research mix through documentary analysis of reportage of EDA, at both the local and national level, as well as academic commentary on these reports. Analysis focused specifically on my multi-sited study, and was strengthened by frequent informal discussions with freelance news and photojournalists within the spaces of EDA, by a virtual questionnaire that was 'posted' to activists, as well as conversation and experience with activists continually negotiating relations with media correspondents. Informal interviews with specific activists provided the final methodology used.

### Thesis outline.

This thesis is a contribution to the understanding of the spatial practices and geography of EDA. In order to contextualise the development of this phenomenon, the account begins with an exploration of the political situation in which Environmental Direct Action has evolved. Chapter Two therefore examines the origins and nature of the democratic deficits of liberal democracy. This chapter outlines the characteristics of liberal democracy, and focuses on the tensions inherent within this mode of political organisation. It examines the four main democratic deficits that can be identified due to these tensions. It focuses on deficits apparent in the nature



of political representation, the exclusive nature of the polity, the emaciated form of the public space under liberal democracy, and the crisis of the 'fourth estate' function of the mainstream media. Chapter Two concludes with a theoretical contextualisation of how those who have been marginalised or excluded by liberal democracy have undertaken different forms of resistance to change their situation.

Chapter Three focuses on the methodology used to operationalise this thesis, it does this by describing the principles and practices chosen. The first section outlines the problems created when adopting a conventionally scientific approach to research on EDA. It goes on to explore an alternative methodological position for research, and does this under the notion of 'third space'. The second section outlines the methodological practices used to operationalise this 'third space'. It describes the particular research tools applied in each 'space' of EDA resistance, including occupied physical spaces, media spaces and virtual spaces.

The thesis continues with three chapters built on empirical evidence obtained through research in the multi-sited study centred at Ashton Court. As a triumvirate these chapters describe and examine the multiple spaces of EDA and the ways in which EDA-ers activate the 'possibility of counter hegemony' in these spaces (after Jones & Moss, in Moore, 1997:101). Chapter Four describes the nature of the multiple 'spaces of EDA'. It examines how EDA alters the political status of space, and the nature of the 'counter hegemony' invoked in these areas. It argues that the cultural values invoked by EDA-ers involve a structure of power based on the autonomy of the individual, leading to the creation of community that involves consideration of both human and non-human species. This chapter goes on to examine how these values permeate and structure the combined spaces of EDA.

Chapter Five explores the multiple vocabularies used by activists to invoke their particular cultural preferences. It will argue that there are four main vocabularies used by EDA-ers: the vocabulary of 'action'; broad ecological philosophies; stories, poems and myths; and the use of more rational environmental and political theory. The chapter comments on the way the vocabulary of 'action' has been viewed by many activists and academics; it will be argued that this vocabulary has been viewed largely from a 'second space' perspective. This standpoint has resulted in the conclusion that activists solely articulate their cultural preferences through this language, that they privilege 'action' over its binary opposite 'thinking'. This chapter will go on to demonstrate that, from a third space perspective, activists adopt other vocabularies which are equally important in invoking their cultural values.

Chapter Six examines the distinguishing features of EDA as a whole. It discusses the level of 'responsibility', 'violence' and 'accountability' characterised by EDA practices; it outlines the nature of 'organisation' that distinguishes EDA, and the 'rhizomatic' character of the phenomenon. The chapter goes on to judge the political significance of EDA through examining the ways in which the British government has responded to the EDA-ers' challenge to the dominant values of modern British culture.

In Chapter Seven we reflect on researching EDA from the third space perspective. A discussion

is held on the consequences the third space approach has for how we understand conventional academic positionality. This reflection moves on to encapsulate how the third space perspective has configured the practice of Environmental Direct Action. An assessment is held of the spatial practices and geography of EDA, as well as the type of political community EDA-ers seek to invoke. This chapter discusses in detail the 'entangled' (after Sharp et al, 2000) geography of EDA that is produced when studying the subject from the perspective of third space.

**Chapter Two. Third Spaces: political resistance and the deficits of liberal democracy.**

As Eckersley (1996) pointed out in Chapter One, a democratic deficit has been identified within the liberal democratic system which has complicated the spaces of political community and activity in important ways. This chapter explores the origin and nature of this democratic deficit in order to contextualise the development of EDA's oppositional political practices. The first section of this chapter outlines some of the characteristics of liberal democracy, focusing on the tensions inherent within this mode of political organisation. The chapter goes on to outline four types of democratic deficit associated with these tensions: these include the crisis in the nature of political representation; the exclusions apparent within the infrastructure of liberal democratic political community; the restrictive spaces of political agency; and the crisis in the formal 'fourth estate' role of the mainstream media. The last section of this chapter will explore how those who have been marginalised or excluded by the deficits of liberal democracy have created new political spaces in which to organise and act politically. Through focusing on both the historical and contemporary context of political protest, this final section outlines this thesis' theoretical approach to resistance.

As Macpherson (1976) informs us, both 'liberalism' and 'democracy' are notions that are highly contested and variously articulated in different times, places and social contexts. In light of this, the debates here are not intended to be the definitive illustration of all positions, but rather a simplified depiction of the main points in order that a general context can be provided for the later discussion on EDA. Although, as Held (1995) identifies, democracy is the 'most potent political idea in the world today', the term's history dates well beyond this time. 'Democracy' translates directly from the Greek 'demo kratia', which literally means 'rule by the people' (Hadenius, 1992), and the notion's lineage goes back to the height of Athenian powers in the Greek civilisation of the fifth century B.C.. One can submit that the concept of democracy has enjoyed such longevity due to the ethical dimension implicit within the notion. Democracy has as its essence the belief in equity between all human subjects, and as a result, democracy is commonly interpreted to imply the existence of a political constituency in which everybody has an equal say in how things are organised (see Beetham 1994, and Button, 1988). Through the adoption of a number of 'essential features' (after Justice?, 1996) - namely the freedoms of speech, association, assembly and movement, coupled to notions of participation, transparency of decision-making, and responsiveness - perceptions of the democratic state resonate with the 'pluralist' vision of politics. In this vision, all individual citizens are equal, and political decisions faithfully reflect the 'glacial movement' of social values and public attitudes (see Rees, 1990). As Saward (in Doherty & de Geus, 1996:84) summarises,

'all this adds up to a democratic vision of a strongly participative, open and responsive



polity. This is not merely a vision of ideal democracy; this is how democracy ought to be understood’.

However, democracy may have also enjoyed significant longevity not solely due to its apparent ethical dimension, but also due to its ability to be applied to a wide variety of political systems. To paraphrase Robertson (1985), ‘democracy is... most valued [*because it is*] the vaguest political term in the modern world’. The issue in relation to democracy thus becomes not the justification and definition of the term itself, but of a certain *form* of democracy. Held suggests that there have been two major forms of democracy struggling for power, direct and indirect systems; the battle has been between democracy as,

‘some kind of popular power (a form of politics in which citizens are engaged in self-government and self-regulation) [and democracy as] an aid to decision-making (a means of conferring authority on those periodically voted into office)’ (Held 1995:5).

As this chapter goes on to discuss, one can see that the liberal form of democracy tends toward the latter notion, and, as later chapters details, EDA-ers gravitate toward the former. As Held (1995:4) again warns us, the ‘liberal’ component of liberal democracy cannot be treated as a unity. There are distinctive liberal market traditions and institutions which embody various conceptions of the individual and their rights and obligations. However, in general terms, the ‘liberal’, or ‘individual liberty’, concept emanated through the work of John Locke (1690), and later John Stuart Mill (1865). These liberal theses argued for the existence of a universal moral code from which basic (moral) rights and entitlements could be established. Liberal theory submitted that all adult subjects within a nation should qualify for these entitlements purely due to their status as political citizens. The adoption of national state administrations provided the foundations upon which the liberal notions of political equality and individual autonomy could be embedded. Through legislation, or the creation of a relevant constitution, a state embodying both liberal and democratic ideals could secure autonomy for the individual. This attainment was a major step forward from other state systems (such as those organised under feudal, totalitarian or authoritarian lines) which had singularly failed to achieve such an end (see Holmes, 1995, and Holden, 1993).

Understanding the failings of liberal democracy (as summarised Eckersley in Chapter One) can be gained through highlighting the ‘tensions’ or perhaps even ‘contradictions’ between its ‘liberal’ and ‘democratic’ components. As Held (1995:9) suggests, the history of liberal democracy has been a battle between,

‘might and right, power and law, duties and rights. On the one hand, states must have a monopoly of coercive power in order to provide a secure basis on which family life, religion, trade and commerce can prosper. On the other hand, by granting the state a regulatory and coercive capability, liberal political theorists were aware that they had accepted a force that could, and frequently did, deprive citizens of political and social freedoms’.

The adoption of liberal democracy had thus secured theoretical and practical gains for the political citizen of the modern nation state. However, inherent within the system was the opportunity for the coercion, manipulation and betrayal of the democratic freedoms promised. The 'essential features' of any democratic state could thus be put in jeopardy, resulting in the existence of a number of democratic deficits. The following sections will briefly outline four ways in which democratic freedoms have been, 'susceptible to abuse and [have] had all kinds of problems' (Sagoff, 1988:115) in terms of their practical implementation in Britain.

#### Democratic deficits (1): The crisis of liberal democratic political representation.

Democracy can take many forms, but liberal democracies have tended to adopt indirect systems, involving the election of representatives in order to speak in parliament on behalf of the people at large. Such indirect systems gain credibility through the existence of free and fair elections, transparent decision-making and accountable and open government. However, political theorists such as Rousseau (1997) believe that any form of representative system is, at root, undemocratic. Since individuals' political identity can only be voiced through the act of voting once in a number of years, it is only at that time when any sort of political equality is apparent, thereafter the polity revert to a position of subordination to their rulers (see Beetham & Boyle, 1995:7). Compounding this situation further, indirect systems can be subverted through corporatist or elitist relations occurring between private individuals and elected officials. In contrast to the pluralist heaven that democracy constitutes in theory (the existence of a neutral, procedural administration arbitrating fairly on matters of legislation), liberal democratic parliaments follow their own ideological paths, and those who share 'ideological cohesion' with those in power tend to be able to enjoy the ear of government far easier than those who beg to differ. (For more detailed explanation of this situation see Rees (1990), Marsh (1983) and Maloney et al (1994)). Individuals or groups can therefore lobby those with power, or attempt to mould public opinion (for example through public rallies, or use of the media) outside the conventional democratic system. It is clear that such ability to lobby politicians will not be equally available to all, dependant as it is on finance, access, time as well as political competences and skills.

In the absence of a universally acknowledged formula for the democratic process it appears therefore that the accompaniment of the theoretical ethical content of democracy, is the risk of its subversion. Indeed, above and beyond that stated theoretically, there are many commentators who have detailed the extent to which 'core political freedoms have been compromised' in Britain in practice (after Ewing and Gearty, 1990:preface). Beetham's work has highlighted the lack of political equality experienced in the UK. In theory, each vote cast by a political citizen in an election ought to have equal value, but due to the disproportionate



electoral system used in the UK (a first past the post process) a party can gain power through establishing a minority of the total vote (42%). As Beetham (1993) suggests, such a system 'significantly diminishe[s] the degree of popular accountability of governments'.

The same research also exposes the problems associated with the absence of an explicit constitution which would provide, in part, limits to the power which the government of the day can wield (in line with classical liberal theses). As Austin Mitchell MP, in Jordan et al (1987:85) suggests, the British constitution is, 'essentially, whatever the government can get away with'. Beetham concludes that this situation holds significant implications for the democratic tradition, he states; 'the executive's freedom from constitutional restraint, or legal checks and balances... result[s] in the polity [stranded] in a state of systemic weakness' (1993:152). This sentiment is echoed by Ewing & Gearty (1990:255),

'the major source of the problem [the crisis in civil liberties] in our view is a political system which has allowed the concentration of power in the hands of the executive and the absence of any effective checks and balances. The position is perhaps all the more remarkable for the fact that power has concentrated in the hands of an executive branch which by all accounts enjoys the support of less than half the voting public. Traditionally the problem for civil liberties has been to protect the minority from the oppression of the majority. In Britain, paradoxically, the problem is increasingly one in which there is a need to protect the majority from the behaviour of an increasingly small minority'.

This academic assessment gives intellectual resonance to more popular criticisms of the process of political representation in liberal democracy. Such criticisms have come from the broadsheet media, political commentators, and from campaigners excluded from the mainstream system (particularly those expressing 'green' political voices). There follows some examples of this criticism:

'There is manifest evidence of people's desire to make their voices heard where decisions are made. Such desire reflects disenchantment with the limited, irregular and predominately passive role offered them under the classic representative government. [It is a] ludicrous fiction that a vote cast for a party represents the total endorsement of all proposals placed in an election manifesto. It is not surprising that citizens eager to have their say find inadequate opportunities to use their voice' (The Times Editorial, 1997:16);

'Some groups are questioning the efficacy of the democratic basis of British society' (Harrison, 1997:16), 'the Westminster agenda is atrophied, narrow and redundant... [we have an] antediluvian democracy' (Porritt (1996:5), 'its time we began to see that an analysis of Britain as a [true] liberal democracy is no longer relevant' (Monbiot, in McKay 1998:185);

'recent years have seen a growing feeling of dissatisfaction and cynicism towards politicians and the so-called democratic process' (Abbott, 1996:25).

Robinson (1992) argues that 'green' political expression has been particularly excluded from British liberal democracy due to the conventions of the electoral system. Robinson states, 'the

traditional representative 'seat' system, dominated by two parties and the first-past-the-post manner in which one of these political parties is elected, militates against the election hopes of smaller parties such as the Green Party' (1992:210)<sup>1</sup>. Alternative forms of liberal democratic political representation, such as those found in the German federal system, allow smaller political parties greater representation in relation to their voting percentage. This has contributed to the relative success of 'Die Grunen' in German politics. Despite the popular, and particularly 'green', dissatisfaction with the British form of liberal democracy, it can be seen that this disenchantment is generally speaking latent and abstract. It is only in specific cases where this dissatisfaction comes to the surface, and it is then articulated forcefully<sup>2</sup>. Cases of environmental destruction are one focus for this disillusionment, with the M3 extension through Twyford Down, and the A34 Newbury bypass being perhaps the most significant and symbolic of these cases. Cases such as these provide a specific context in which this first deficit of the democratic system becomes manifest to citizens. Individuals experience the lack of opportunity to gain political representation in the democratic system, the lack of transparency of decision-making, and the apparent existence of corporatist relations between business interests and elected representatives (see Anderson, 1995). In cases such as these, therefore, this first democratic deficit existing in liberal democracy in Britain becomes patently clear, and the notion is promoted that alternative spaces need to be taken and made in order to represent marginalised political visions.

#### Democratic deficits (2): the exclusive nature of the liberal democratic political community.

A second democratic deficit is apparent in liberal democracy. Sagoff forewarns us of the nature of this particular problem;

'liberal politic[s]... cannot commit a democracy before hand to adopting general rules or principles that answer the moral questions that confront it; if [liberal politics] could do this, it would become autocratic and inconsistent with democracy' (1998:162).

It can be seen that liberalism's prior commitment to particular philosophical notions, especially those regarding 'individualism' and 'community', has indeed led to inconsistencies with the principles of democracy, and a further democratic deficit. This section broadly outlines the specific notions that have led to this second tension between liberalism and democracy, and then explores the nature of the democratic deficit that has been produced as a result. Liberalism's specific notions of individualism and community emanated from a cultural

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson also notes that internal splits between 'fundamentalists' and 'realists' within the Green Party mitigates against their political challenge in the liberal democratic system (1992:206).

<sup>2</sup> To paraphrase Beck (1995:50), there is widespread dissatisfaction with existing structures of professional exclusiveness and expert consensus; 'Tolerance of despoliation wear thin only where people can see their way of life jeopardised, in manner they can both know and interpret, within the horizon of their expectations and valuations'.



paradigm shift which can perhaps be stylised as the move from 'pre-modern' to 'modern' thinking. Robinson (1992:50) argues that this now dominant modern worldview originated from western Renaissance science and its emphasis on 'specialisation'. This worldview displaced 'holistic' ways of thinking about religion, the monarchy and politics with new notions regarding individualism. Conceptually speaking, the interdependent and interrelated world was taken apart and re-configured in distinct, atomistic units (In much the same way as a mechanic might take apart a car engine today). As a result, many areas of human life were studied as if they were individual phenomena without a relational and situational context. An atomistic conception of reality was produced, where units had 'ontological priority' (after Mathews, 1995) and were defined purely in terms of themselves and the capacities they were perceived to entertain. Human capacity, for example, was rationally segregated by a binary division, namely mind and body, and since the mind was deemed to be the source of thought and intellect, was privileged in this relation. Through the privileging of mental capacity, humans could intellectually (if not physically) separate themselves from their position in the planetary biosphere. Extending the principle of 'separation and privilege', humans then located themselves at the pinnacle of this atomistic reality, thus debasing all non-human entities into secondary importance<sup>3</sup>.

The dominance of this atomistic conception of reality influenced greatly the relations between the liberal democratic individual and wider society. As Holden (1993) cites, the liberal thesis developed into one that could not comprehend 'people as a community', it conceived the individual as pre-existent to society rather than as socially constituted. In other words, since liberalism conceived society as nothing more than an aggregation of individual interests, what was good for the individual was good for society as a whole - thus the liberty of the individual, and that of the people were effectively conflated<sup>4</sup>. This directly effected political space through influencing the nature of issues that gained priority in this context. Citizens prioritised individual concerns over those of wider society, and since citizens' motivations had been atomised down to economic interests, liberal politics became dominated by, 'unbridled egotism', the, 'embrace of crass materialism, repudiation of the common good, [and the] rational and calculating

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<sup>3</sup>Environmentalists have identified the development of Renaissance science ideas as central to the eco-crisis. As Capra (1983:24) cites, it was at this point in history that; 'the notion of an organic, living, and spiritual universe was replaced by that of the world as a machine'. Instead of conceptualising the planetary biosphere as an interrelating, interdependent, organic cosmos, the non-human world was conceived of as lacking agency, creativity or any goal of its own. The environment was thus deemed to be a passive backdrop to human activity (see Tilley, 1994:11-20) and valued solely in instrumental terms. As Goldsmith describes, 'Nature in the west is instrumentalised as a mere means to human ends via the application of a moral dualism that treats humans as the only proper objects of moral consideration and defines 'the rest' as part of the sphere of expediency. The natural world and the biosphere have been treated as a dump, as forming the unconsidered, instrumentalised and unimportant background to 'civilised' human life' (1996:69).

<sup>4</sup>This conception of the private and the public does not recognise the relational aspects of the human condition (a notion well expressed by the Gestalt school of psychology), and thus does not identify the potential for an 'individual' to be oppressed by the 'people', and vice versa (see Smith, 1988).



pursuit of economic advantage' (after Holmes 1995:2). (In contemporary liberal democracies, citizens are now increasingly conceptualised more as consumers, rather than voters - although the theoretical projection of a 'citizen' interested and involved in a broader civic project has gained political currency (in rhetoric at least) through, for example, the work of Hutton (1997)).

The privileging of instrumental rationality and self-interest also influenced the political context as these characteristics became the benchmark against which the right to enter the polity was adjudged. The Cartesian model of western democracy, as feminist critiques (such as Pateman, 1989) have pointed out, was implicitly white, middle class and male. It was against this 'norm' that the rest of humanity was compared. Thus women, blacks and the lower classes were subordinated in the binary divisions constructed in the Modern world, their difference to this valorised 'norm' defined as an inability to function as a political citizen<sup>5</sup>. In short, these groups were effectively excluded from the democratic polity, and had to undertake campaigns (outside the conventional political system) in order to be granted their fundamental democratic rights. This has been most evident in the struggle for female emancipation by the Suffragettes movement in this country (see Benson, 1984), and the black civil rights movement in the United States (see Berkes, 1989).

Similar democratic deficits have also been experienced in liberal democracy in terms of the 'new environmental constituency', as Eckersley's quotation in Chapter One implies.

Environmental writers such as Goldsmith (1996) conjecture that this failing emanates directly from Renaissance science's anthropocentric and instrumental view of the environment. It is argued that, as a result of this view, liberal democracy has had no incentive to internalise environmental costs or include non-compatriots, non-human species or non-sentient entities into moral or political consideration. As Devall & Sessions (1985:64) argue;

'The critical factor... is the narrowness of the moral community the civilisation complex recognises. Because the majority tradition views the world in utilitarian terms and refuses to include as part of its ethical community the plant and animal communities that sustain it, there is no restraint, at least in the short term, on its destruction of the natural world. In the long run, of course, this myopic utilitarianism turns on itself by depleting the environment to the point that it can no longer be exploited as a storehouse of resources. The paradox of anthropocentrism is that a

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<sup>5</sup>To focus on the gender issue as an exemplar, these divisions derived from the distinctions between 'public' and 'private' inherent within liberal theory. Liberalism, according to Jagger (1983:144) configures a, 'distinction between the public 'economic' world of the market, and the private 'non-economic' sphere of the home'. Since in general men inhabited the public economic world, and women lived in the private home (in Pateman's 'ascriptive domestic sphere'), patriarchal roles were simply extended into political reality by liberalism. Mitchell's research (1994) bears this out, it suggests that Modern women could not own property or sign contracts in the liberal public world, their only articulation of themselves as individuals was through their subsumption, as a relation to their fathers, or their husbands through the marriage contract. Women became private citizens (i.e. excluded from the public arena and thus consequently consigned as non-political), and the individual of liberalism was implicitly agreed to be male.



world conceived with only human ends in mind seems to become inhospitable to any human ends in the long run' (Devall and Sessions, 1985:64).

Many have argued therefore that liberal democracy not only fails to provide adequate means of representation for those who are included in the polity, but also fails to embrace the full political constituency. This second democratic deficit is said to be a consequence of Renaissance science's flawed conception of the 'individual' and its relation to 'community'. These arguments postulate, in short, that the liberal democratic system in practice is not wholly consistent with the theoretical depiction of democracy. To paraphrase Sagoff (1998:162), as liberal politics has committed democracy to general rules and principles regarding the moral questions that confront it, political organisation has become autocratic and inconsistent with democracy itself.

### Democratic deficits (3): the political spaces of Liberal Democracy.

Theoretically the public areas for liberal democratic political action and deliberation have been separated into two types: 'public spheres' and 'public spaces'.

'The practice of citizenship is intimately linked to the existence of a public sphere where members of civil society can exist as citizens and act collectively to resolve democratically the issues concerning their life in the political community' (d'Entreves, in Mouffe, 1992:9).

The ideal model for an arena of democracy is the public sphere. As the above quotation by d'Entreves suggests, the public sphere is the arena in which democracy takes place. According to Eley (1992:290), the public sphere, 'mediates between society and state [It is the space] in which the public organises itself as the bearer of public opinion'. Although being the place of democracy, the public sphere does not materially exist at any moment in time; it is a space that has to be actualised. This 'making real' process can be achieved in a number of ways: the public sphere could be actualised through common language, geography, culture, ideology or technology. These devices facilitate the disclosure of individuals' political identities in order that a common reality, or 'the world we have in common' (after Arendt, in Mouffe, 1992:144), is made visible to all concerned. Due to this need for actualisation, the public sphere is a transient and fragile, but also a durable and timeless entity. The sphere may not be actualised simply through the gathering of people (the prerequisite of disclosure and thus the recognition of some form of 'common world' may not be apparent), but the possibility of this 'common world' existing in some form or another is always present. Perhaps due to the idealised and yet transient nature of the public sphere, it is often seen to be a normative political model rather than a material place of democracy (following Habermas, 1984). As a consequence of this understanding, the promise of the actualisation of the public sphere haunts the spatial imaginary of democratic politics.



In contrast to idealised and transient nature of the public sphere, 'public space' is the material and tangible space of politics. The distinction between the two forms of democratic arena is crucial for Howell as it is in the, 'context of real public spaces that alternative movements may arise and contest issues of citizenship and democracy' (1993:318). At its best, public space is truly democratic, inclusive space. Reflecting the ideal of the public sphere, it is an arena in which individuals are free to represent their political identities in any manner they choose, thus publicising and making visible this identity and fashioning the public space into an arena for political recruitment, validation and enlargement. As Mitchell (1995:115) suggests, through the process of claiming space in public, i.e. the creation of public space, 'social groups themselves become public'. Such spaces therefore serve as accessible public forums in which alternative or dissenting voices can be articulated. Young concurs, stating that in public spaces, 'one should expect to encounter and hear from those who are different, whose social perspectives, experience and affiliations are different' (1990:119).

As with democracy, public space has history dating back to Grecian time. Since then the space has always served, as Hartley suggests, as,

'the place of citizenship, an open space where public affairs and legal disputes were conducted...it was also a marketplace, a place of pleasurable jostling, where citizens' bodies, words, actions and produce were all literally on mutual display, and where judgements, decisions, and bargains were made' (1992:29-30).

In liberal democratic society, public space exists as one true political space under pressure of 'annihilation' (after Schmitt, 1976) from the forces of individualism and 'natural law'. Public spaces have become, as Arendt states, 'small hidden islands of freedom', [perhaps even islands of resistance, or opposition, as we will come to later] surrounded by 'Foucault's carceral archipelago' (taken from Howell 1993:313). It is only in these 'hidden islands', that space is available for citizens to press for objectives not privileged by the liberal mainstream. As such, public space, is, 'politicised at its very core' (Mitchell 1995:115), its forbearance of alternative, conflicting and possibly radical politics engender a situation where the space inherently includes the risk of danger, especially (and paradoxically) if it is functioning well.

In light of the democratic deficits already outlined, Lefebvre (1991) has added a useful distinction to the debate on public spaces (work that has been taken further by Soja (1996) amongst others). Lefebvre separates what we understand of as public space into 'representational', and 'representations of', public space. Lefebvre suggests that the former, representational space, is space that can be freely used, lived, or appropriated by individuals, or groups of individuals for political ends. It is the essence of public space projected into practice. The latter, representations of space, are spaces that, in contrast, have been externally controlled, ordered or planned (by the state or private entity), in order to limit the types of political activity that can be practiced therein.

'Public space represents both physical public space and the idea of democracy. To a



number of urban theorists, parks, streets and squares are physical embodiments of the principles of democracy and community. Changes to the physical fabric of a city thus throw these principles into question. Specifically, the physical artefacts representing the idea of a public sphere for democratic debate are pushed aside and replaced by 'simulations' (Light, in Crang et al, 1999:110).

If, as Light argues, public space embodies the principles of democracy, Lefebvre's distinction is particularly useful to us at this point since it introduces the notion of external control, or the 'taming', of public space. Through this external control, the theoretical possibilities promised by public space are precluded in practice; thus, the space can only serve its function symbolically. A government of a liberal democratic state may regulate public space in order to control potential dangers to its stable operation. A truly representational space, involving the articulation and dissemination of potentially radical or subversive political material, may disturb both the state's ideological stability and the agendas it seeks to serve. As *The Ecologist* (1993:70) states,

'those who remain on the margins of the new mainstream, either by choice or because that is where society has pushed them, are not only deemed to have little value: they are perceived as a threat.... Their protests are classed as subversive and a threat to political stability. Because they are perceived as a threat, they become objects to be controlled, the legitimate subjects of further enclosure'.

This enclosure, or 'taming' of space, involves not only the restriction of behaviour through legal channels, but also fulfils the perceived need for order through actual or virtual surveillance. Methods of 'taming' have been usefully detailed by Mitchell (1995). One method governments have used to 'tame' space has been the translation of public spaces into 'dead' spaces through the use of the planning system. The results of such central administration are clear to see in many vast open squares in modern cityscapes, and are also visible in the open plazas surrounding offices and businesses. Planning also enables the construction of 'festive' areas, spaces whose function, according to Mitchell, are those of consumption - i.e. spaces such as marketplaces, malls or shopping centres.

The effect of dead and festive spaces is the preclusion of any space that individuals can easily take and make in line with their own political ends. This is achieved through the policing of such areas, perhaps by private security, close circuit television, or through self-regulation - the perception that such political activity could place the proponents in some 'danger' (perhaps through loss of employment, or arrest, or social embarrassment). The possibility of free social interaction, unmediated by third parties, is also precluded through the 'disneyfication' of space (see Roszak, 1989, as well as Mitchell 1995). In 'disneyfied' areas, the reality of political space is removed and substituted with the appearance of the original (this type of space perhaps most closely reflects what Lefebvre had in mind with his representations of space). These areas are filled with gestures towards political participation, whilst the authenticity and effectiveness of this participation are open to question. As Debord (1993) cites in his work on



the society of the spectacle, symbolism and images increasingly stand in for 'real' experiences and interaction, diffusing public pressure for political freedom, and creating a charade of autonomy masking a situation of control and surveillance beneath. As Crilley notes, the public realm is being, 'deliberately shaped as theater' (1993:153), the signs and images of political participation becoming more natural and desirable than involvement itself. As a consequence, Goss suggests that individuals have accepted false images due to their need for political identity,

'our desire for...the privileges of public urban space...is such that we will readily accept nostalgia as a substitute for experience, absence for presence, and representation for authenticity' (quoted in Mitchell, 1995:143).

Although we have seen that the true authenticity of public space has always been dubious, moves to control space have grown in frequency and become a common part of modern life. Such controls on public space have become so widespread that the opportunity for unmediated political interaction in modern liberal democracy is increasingly unlikely. It is possible that this form of political organisation will no longer grant true public space, thus in order to enjoy political representation and the benefits of public space individuals have no choice but to take and make political space themselves.

#### Democratic deficits (4): the mainstream media as the fourth estate?

'The free flow of information and communication is essential to a democratic society, and thus democracy requires that powerful instruments of information and communication be accessible to all' (Kellner, [www.ma.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/kids/ma.theory.1.3.db](http://www.ma.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/kids/ma.theory.1.3.db)).

As we have seen from Chapter One, it is necessary to conceptualise the mainstream media as part and parcel of any understanding of modern society and politics. This section will interrogate the role of mainstream media in terms of liberal democracy and examine whether it fulfils its theoretical function as the fourth estate. From the classic liberal standpoint, the mass media serves as a back-up or 'homeostasis' mechanism for liberal democracy. It theoretically ensures that if any crises of representation appear in the liberal democratic system, a space will be provided for those marginalised voices to be heard. From this perspective, the media is deemed to be a relatively neutral body which reflects the public interest (alongside the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary) in the best pluralist tradition. As Cottle suggests, the mass media is the tool capable of, 'safeguarding the interests of representative democracy', it can do this by not only by providing a space for representation, but also by, 'providing a citizenry with the requisite knowledge on which political opinion formation depends and the democratic will can be implemented' (In Hansen, 1993:36).

From a more critical standpoint, one can see that the bodies that have control over the media have, because of this control, an opportunity to subvert the classic 'fourth estate' function of



mass communication technologies (i.e. television, radio and newsprint). The media have the potential to valorise certain representations of reality, and marginalise others. In this situation, it is important to investigate the power which controls the mainstream media, in order to discover what potential biases and prospective agendas could be influencing the images of the world that the mass public receive.

It can be argued that there are a number of elements that combine together to influence the images of the world that the mass public receive. These elements can be broadly conceptualised as 'the linkages in the media chain'. These linkages include the ownership of the media (including advertisers, publishers, and retailers), journalist working practices (including source relations), and the influence of the media's audience. Each linkage will be discussed in turn.

'A Carlton documentary by John Pilger condemned the state of modern journalism. Said Pilger, 'The new ethic is that journalism is a commodity designed purely to generate money. This is the 'Murdoch' effect'' (Peak & Fisher, 1997:18).

Whoever owns and controls the mainstream news media clearly has the potential to influence the content and style of news culture and production. Debates on this subject tend to focus on the growing power of a small number of corporations monopolising media production (for example, Rupert Murdoch's News International). However, as Edwards (1988) argues, such debates overlook the problem that media production itself is completely owned by corporations, who all have the same objective. As Edwards claims, 'all [are] in the business of maximising profits, all [are] tied into the stock market'. This situation suggests to Edwards that the media companies, 'might have a tendency to be sympathetic to corporations, to the status quo and to the profit-maximising motive of the corporate system - given that they are part of that system' (1998:18). If this is accepted, those ideologies and perspectives that do not adhere to the motives of the corporate system may not get a fair representation by the mass media. It is clear that the environmental movement, which generally articulates a strong antipathy to the corporate system, is one such group that may suffer from such 'bad' press<sup>6</sup>. The next linkage in the media chain can also influence representations in the mainstream media: that of advertising. Although public service television offers no advertising, the vast majority of the mainstream media (both radio, TV and newsprint) carries product promotion<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup>An example of this can be seen if the Independent Television Commission's report on Channel 4's 'Against Nature' series is studied. 'Against Nature' was widely criticised for its unfair treatment of environmental issues, amongst other things it accused the environmental movement of being like the Third Reich (see SchNEWS, Issue 161 @www.schnews.org.uk). The ITC ruled that the programme was 'misleading' and 'distorted'. Peter Melchett (Greenpeace) was interviewed for the programme, after broadcast he stated, 'I said one thing, then had it cut to make it seem as if I had said something else. The programmes were inaccurate, anti-environmentalist propaganda' (ibid.). Although criticised, Channel 4 is still intending to syndicate this programme abroad, without reference to the ITC's judgement.

<sup>7</sup>Daily papers in Britain attracts nearly £1.5 billion a year in advertising – due to this income they have little need for government subsidies and tax concessions prevalent in most other European countries (Peak & Fisher, 1997:24).



As Sampson argues (in Edwards 1998:19), the power wielded by advertising should not be underestimated;

'Journalists have been constrained from reporting or criticising...by pressures from owners, advertisers and public relations men, who helped set the agenda of the business pages... they all project a lifestyle of hectic spending and travelling, heavily influenced by advertisers, and play down non-commercial tastes, whether for poetry, old books or the countryside'<sup>8</sup>.

Other powerful linkages in the media chain include printers and retailers. In the case of *The Ecologist*, a magazine with a focus on environmental issues, the influence of both actants can be illustrated. In 1998, *The Ecologist* produced an edition devoted to the debate on Genetically Modified Organisms, principally focusing on Monsanto, the largest biotechnology multinational. The edition highlighted Monsanto's track record of social and ecological irresponsibility, and, in *The Ecologist's* own words, 'illustrated [Monsanto's] readiness to intimidate and quash those ideas which conflict with its immediate interests'. Before dissemination, the magazine's printers (Penwells) destroyed 14,000 copies of the edition, and the retailers WHSmith and John Menzies refused to stock their allocated share. *The Ecologist's* co-editor, Zac Goldsmith remarked,

'Through reputation alone Monsanto has been able...to bring about what is in effect defacto censorship. No one will deny the importance of balancing the one-sided messages put out by Monsanto in its advertisements, yet in practice it is almost impossible for critics to do so' (<http://www.gn.apc.org/ecologist/index.html>).

The EDA zine 'SchNEWS' reported the incident in the following, suitably ironical, way;

'Why should Penwell's suddenly buckle in fear of libel action and terminate a longstanding friendship with its publishers? The Defamation Act 1996 introduced an 'innocent dissemination' defence for printers who have taken 'reasonable care' and 'were not aware of' the libellous nature of the matter they may have printed. Penwell's it seems, were legally covered. Why this sudden parting of the ways? Penwell's David Montgomery told SchNEWS, 'Following legal advice we thought it better not to print something that may or may not be libellous. We weren't prepared to take the risk'. Of course Monsanto, them good ole wholesome superfood creators, who may not have anything to do with f\*\*\*ing the planet's life system for profit, have absolutely not threatened to put Penwell's out of business' (SchNEWS, Issue 185, <http://www.schnews.org.uk>).

Coupled to the pressures brought to bear internally within the media chain, journalists' working conditions also influence the way in which reports are compiled. At the level of the individual

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<sup>8</sup>Edwards (1988) cites an example of a case in the United States that serves to illustrate this point well. The station 'WNET' lost its funding from 'Gulf & Western' in 1985 due to its screening of a programme that criticised the multi-national's activities in the developing world. Although the programme was 'sanitised' before eventual broadcast, the Chief Executive of Gulf & Western complained to the station that the programme was, 'virulently anti-business if not anti-American' and that by carrying that programme the station was clearly not a 'friend' of the corporation. The Economist reported that WNET was unlikely to make the same mistake again.



media station or newspaper, each organisation has a specific political outlook geared to a specific public constituency. This individual news culture will combine with the influences above to determine the style and content of news production, as a former environment correspondent for *The Times* implies,

*'The Times* is a paper for the establishment so I tend to do Whitehall things. *The Telegraph* is a paper for the petit-bourgeoisie so Charlie tends to do countryside things; *The Guardian* is a paper of the left so Paul does nuclear energy and whales' (in Anderson, 1997:59)

Over journalists' careers, individuals tend to gravitate to news organisations that reflect their own political interests and style of reportage. (A freelance journalist at Ashton Court told me in conversation that the local paper *The Western Daily Press* attracts many ex-reporters from the *Daily Mail* due to a complementarity of politics and working cultures). More generally, reporters in most newsrooms often have a number of stories to compile in any working day, and thus cannot get information for all of them in person. Many interviews and data gathering assignments are thus carried out over the telephone. Such everyday pressures mean that journalists are heavily reliant on external information sources in order to function properly. As Ericson et al state (in Anderson, 1997:45);

*'news is a product of transactions between journalists and their sources. The primary source of reality for news is not what is displayed or what happens in the real world. The reality of news is embedded in the nature and type of social and cultural relations that develop between journalists and their sources.'*

The main sources, or 'primary definers' (after Burgess & Gold, 1985) for journalists are often State-related agencies, for example, government departments, quangos, or the police. It could be argued that, in most instances, it is unlikely that journalists will jeopardise media-source relationships by being openly critical of the aforementioned bodies. David Nyhan (journalist at the Boston Globe) makes such a case, he states, 'The reality of our fearsome newshounds is that they are a docile, not to say boot-licking, lot, subsisting largely on occasional bones of access tossed into the press kennel' (from Edwards, 1998:21).

*'The first law of the mass media: Give the public what they want' (James Bond, in 'Tomorrow Never Dies', 1997).*

The fourth factor that serves to preclude the likelihood of the media functioning in the interests of democracy is the tendency of the media to 'play to the gallery'. If a study is taken of journalist training documents, an issue that rises to prominence regularly is the importance of 'knowing your reader' (see Peak & Fisher, 1997). Regular reader surveys are carried out in order to determine the political, financial and leisure interests of their targeted public constituency. Thus the changing opinions of this constituency can be seen to influence greatly the tone that media organisations choose to take on an issue. One could argue that the media



watch the public reaction to (eco) conflict and mirror this in their reports, they go along with Schattschneider when he said, 'If a flight starts, watch the crowd' (Maloney et al, 1994:29). Such a situation may produce more 'entertainment' than 'information' in news production, and pander to the prejudices of the majority, rather than produce balanced, rigorous reportage<sup>9</sup>.

It can be seen that the linkages in the media chain have the potential to influence and control the long-term orientation of the mainstream media. Due to this orientation the media may fail to provide open, unbiased information from which the public can base opinion. This conclusion complements the radical theoretical perspective which views the mainstream media as a prime disseminator of ideas, images and representations that are used to forward particular hegemonic political agendas, rather than provide forums for open discussion. Hall (in Lowe & Morrison, 1984:77) concurs with this opinion, he states,

'The critical stance... regards the news as non-neutral: the mass media operate to promote certain views of the world which favour existing social relationships and dominant ideology, at the expense of other views',

as do Chomsky & Herman (1988:144),

'There is no great media conspiracy, but this propaganda system systematically supports the interests of society's elite. The first filter is the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth and profit orientation of dominant media outlets. The second is their alliance on advertising as a primary source of income. Third comes the media's acceptance of information provided by government and business - or 'experts' who are funded or approved by them. Fourthly, powerful people use 'flak' to show their displeasure at negative media statements and to enforce discipline'.

To date this chapter has illustrated that there are four democratic deficits identifiable in liberal democracy. Deficits are experienced in the manner with which individuals can voice political concern, which individuals enjoy full political standing, the increasing enclosure of public spaces, and the failure of the mass media to function as the 'fourth estate'. As a result of these

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<sup>9</sup>Crosslines Global Report (cited in Corporate Watch, 1998) recently reported on a court case involving NBC (owned by the General Electric Company) that illustrated the power wielded by audience tastes in media reportage. The case revealed that the television network's Entertainment Division was virtually in control of the stories selected for its current affairs programme 'Dateline NBC'. The report stated that news producers were virtually forbidden from running stories that wouldn't sell advertising. The best stories were 'familiar human dramas' which were 'within the consciousness of the American public, our viewing audience'. In other words, as Crosslines stated, 'Dateline NBC had crossed the line from news into entertainment - It didn't tell the public anything new, and it certainly wasn't interested in the activities of foreigners'.

An example from this country was reported on the videozine Undercurrents #6. It replayed a 'News at Ten' location report on a toddler who walked home on her own through an 'unlocked door' from a nursery. Over this report Undercurrents scrolled: 'ITN chose not to cover: racial harassment in schools in Leeds, 7 London policemen charged with assault, unlawful imprisonment and conspiring to pervert the course of justice, 10000 Muslims confront police in Nigeria as spiritual leader arrested, 1st French politician to stand trial for sending Jews to death camps, Clinton announces national monument to preserve 2 million acres of Utah wilderness'.



deficits, the space individuals enjoy to articulate, disseminate or publicise their political identities and visions become increasingly limited. As a consequence of this, many individuals are forced to fight back against these democratic deficits and search for spaces in which they can be political. The next section of this chapter moves this discussion forward by outlining how individuals have practised resistance against these democratic deficits.

### Resistance and liberal democracy or, How do people excluded from liberal democracy become political?

Many waves of resistance have occurred against the democratic deficits experienced in liberal democracy. Dating back to the peasant movement of the 1640s (when the Levellers fought for universal suffrage in order to defend their way of life and access to land (see Dow, 1985, & Scott, 1985)), Britain has experienced many campaigns against the dominant organisation of modern society. The dismissal, ignorance and denial of women's political identity by the dominant system provoked, for example, a sustained campaign against disenfranchisement (which began with Mary Woolstonecraft in the 18th century, see Dunn (1992), and according to Pateman (1989) and Siltanen & Stanworth (1984) is still occurring today). In order that we can go on to discuss the new wave of (environmental) resistance from an informed position, the final section of this chapter contextualises these waves of protest by providing a theoretical approach to resistance.

Resistance to reform, reconfigure or reject political systems and their associated philosophies comes in many different forms. As Pile (1997:1) suggests, resistance is anything that, 'stands in implacable opposition to 'power' held by an elite, who use oppressive, injurious and contemptible means to secure their control'. Using Pile's description, allied to the liberal democratic case that concerns us, 'resistance' becomes that which is practiced by those who wish their political identity represented and acted upon in the liberal democratic state. Acts of resistance will be practiced by those who are relatively powerless, but through attempting to alter dominant conceptions of political space, hope to consequently alter these power relations. Likewise, 'power' resides in those elected within liberal democracy, and with those who share ideological cohesion with the dominant system. The 'means of securing control' in this case become the delimiting of representation in the four arenas discussed in first section of this chapter.

Although many of the methods for controlling resistance have been alluded to in the previous section, acts of resistance can also be inhibited simply through definition. Since the state is capable of defining 'resistance', it is able to confine 'resisting' acts to those, 'that appear to oppose directly, in the open, where it can be made and seen to fail' (Pile, 1997:3). Yet this definitional control overlooks other forms of resistance that are more subtle and 'everyday'.



Scott's work on peasant resistance focuses on such latter forms, on the, 'ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups' (1985:29). Scott agrees with Pile that outright rebellion generally results in the reinforcement of the state's hegemonic power, and thus the apparently trivial nature of such resistance practices as foot dragging, false compliance and deception should not be overlooked as forms of symbolic confrontation with powerful elites (although the absolute, concrete effects of such activities may be marginal). Sharp et al (2000:3) also recognise the broad scope of acts of resistance, they state;

'resisting power...can involve very small, subtle and some might say trivial moments, such as breaking wind when the king goes by, but it can also involve more developed moments when discontent translates into a form of social organisation which actively co-ordinates people, materials and practices in pursuit of specifiable transformative goals'.

Another dimension of resistance that is overlooked by state definitions focuses on the 'inner worlds' of individuals. As the following suggests,

'It is highly unlikely that people will feel willing to resist if they feel they are useless and powerless and have no room for manoeuvre nor the capacity to change anything. Resistance, then... must also engage the colonised spaces of people's inner worlds. Indeed, it could be argued that the production of 'inner spaces' marks out the real break point of political struggle...maybe' (Pile, 1997:17).

Focusing on the 'inner spaces' of resistance that individuals create, perhaps through cosmologies and ethical belief systems, can therefore give added insights into more politically overt acts of resistance. It is in these inner worlds of resistance that individual's perceive their own standing and relation to society, other individuals and the wider environment, and it is thus from these perspectives that personal morality and political action stem. Without the inclusion of this 'inner world' a significant element of political motivation is left unexplored by study. Pile reiterates the importance he thinks is attached to this 'inner world' of resistance;

'It could well be the way in which people deal both with threats to their sense of who they are and what their lives are about and also with their desires, fears, repulsions, and so on, that will be constitutive of their politics, of the things they are prepared to undertake politically. In this sense, it could be [the inner world] that compels the... 'political' acts' (1997:25).

Such a broad understanding enables resistance to be related to the 'meaning' given to particular practices, by both those practising and attempting to control resistance, and as such underlies the complex relations associated with the term. It also allows for the configuration of differing degrees of opposition being articulated by acts of resistance (as witnessed in hooks description of the race and gender case of the civil rights movement, see hooks, 1982); in some cases the liberal democratic state will be radicalised, in others it will be rejected altogether. Resistance therefore needs to be viewed as a multi-faceted, complex activity with various motivations, avenues of articulation and 'political' - in its broadest senses - objectives. As Pile finally asserts,



**'Once passive, inert and singular notions of spatiality and identity are abandoned, then it becomes clear that resistance is as much defined through the struggle to define liberation, space and subjectivity as through the elite's attempts to defeat, prevent and oppress those who threaten their authority' (1997:27).**

**'If politics is about making history, then it is also about changing space' (Keith & Pile, 1997:8).**

As the social agency debate tells us (see Giddens, 1995), individuals are capable of manipulating, changing or subverting power relations to their own ends. From a geographical perspective, this can be achieved through 'taking' different spaces and reworking the power relations that characterise them. According to Keith & Pile, such arenas become, 'deceptive spaces of costume and trickery', they are areas in which, 'people blur the edges of [their] political identity' (1997:14). De Certeau makes comments on similar lines, he tells us, there are 'innumerable ways of playing and foiling the other's game, that is, the space instituted by others' (1984:18). These practices, 'characterise the subtle, stubborn, resistant activity of groups which, since they lack their own space, have to get along in a network of already established forces and representations...' (ibid:18). Thus resistance can be seen to be an inherently spatial activity, it alters, subverts and blurs spatial practices and geographies; in short, resistance changes space.

To reiterate the debate on public space, it is of crucial importance for underrepresented groups to make themselves visible through the 'taking' of place. Organisations, social movements or common-interest groups thus struggle to gain a public platform for the articulation of a facet of their political identity through temporarily or permanently altering the accepted public/private uses of space. As Routledge (1997:361) offers, in order to effect resistance, groups must outmanoeuvre the authority's attempts to control and regulate people's use and access to space, through the establishment of, 'social spaces and socio-spatial networks that are insulated from control and surveillance'. Complementing the broad definition of resistance itself above, these spaces and networks could be real in nature, or perhaps simply symbolic. Routledge cites hooks (1991) and the importance she attaches to these 'homeplaces' (hooks' description) as sources of self-dignity and agency, sites of solidarity in which and from which, resistance can be organised and practised. The creation of these 'homeplaces' can then form the basis on which the configuration of political community can be formed by those practising resistance; in liberal democratic parlance, new distinctions between the public and the private can be made in line with their prevailing political ethos.

The taking of space has critical resonance with Hakim Bey's, 'Temporary Autonomous Zone' or TAZ (see [http://www.hermetic.com/bey/taz\\_cont.html](http://www.hermetic.com/bey/taz_cont.html)). This form of resistance Bey allies with a broad range of protest activity,

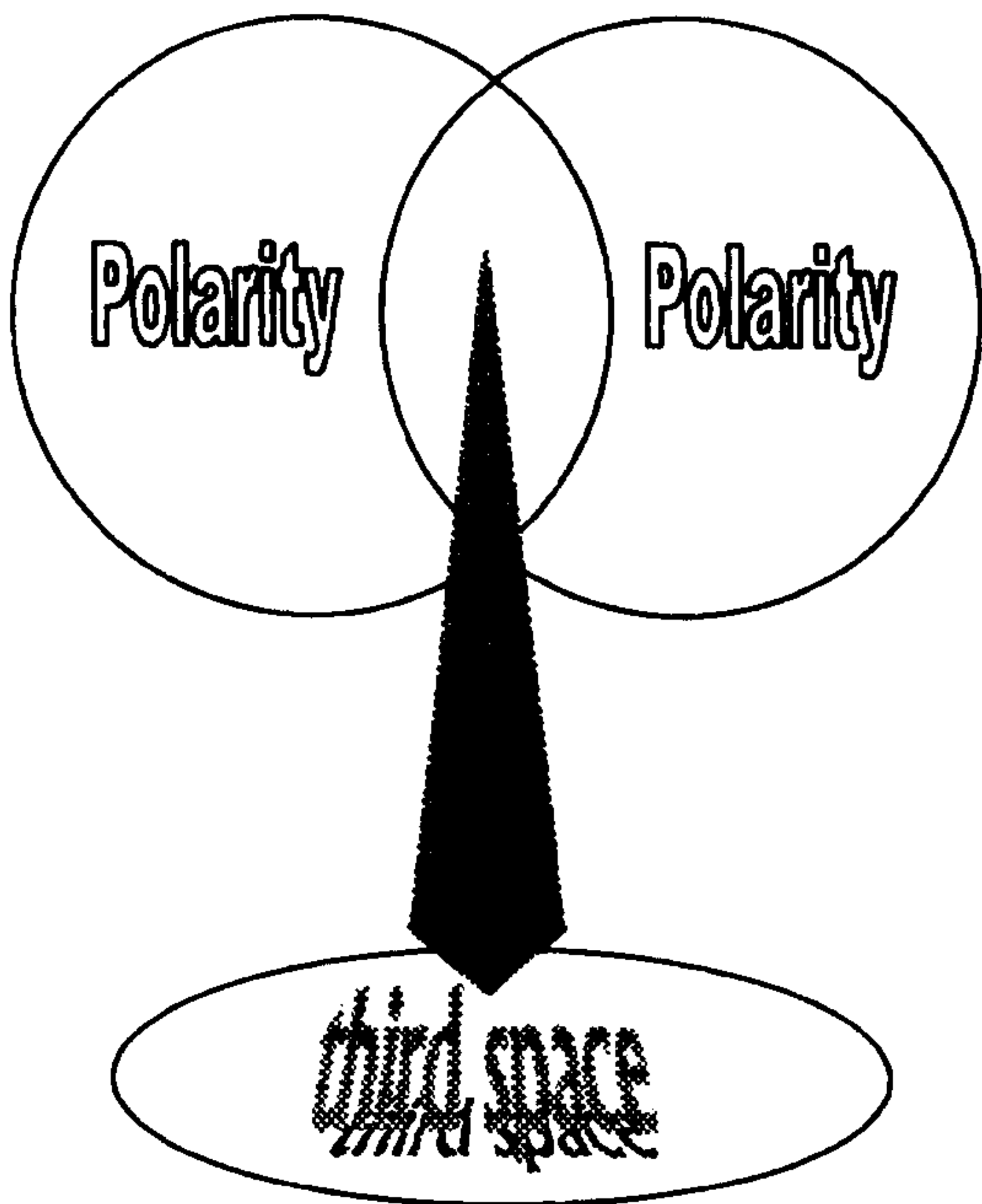
**'The sixties-style 'tribal gathering', the forest conclave of eco-saboteurs, the idyllic Beltane of the neo-pagans, anarchist conferences, gay faery circles...Harlem rent parties of the twenties, nightclubs, banquets, libertarian picnics - we should realise that these**



are already ‘liberated zones’ of a sort, or at least potential TAZ’ (in McKay, 1996:72).

The temporary occupation of such actual spaces, or the repositioning of ‘self’ in different political relations (i.e. in spaces of deception or trickery) result in the spaces concerned becoming ambiguous in their political nature. Bhabha (1994) conceptualises such ambiguous political space as ‘third space’. In third spaces Bhabha suggests power relationships are never certain, complete or free from fragmentation; they have the effect of disrupting the accepted boundaries which delimit the prevailing dualisms of hegemonic practice, thus producing new spaces beyond the realm of these existing dualisms. The notion of third space thus works to ‘elude the politics of polarity’ (1994:39), and dissolves the familiar co-ordinates of private and public, high and low, black and white (ibid.:14). Third spaces become areas in which identities (be they singular or communal) are not seen in isolated terms, but as innovative sites of collaboration.

In diagrammatical terms, third space could perhaps be simply depicted in the following way (see Figure 2:1). In this representation, the familiar co-ordinates of existing political polarities (i.e. the ‘left’ and ‘right’ circles, be they representative of ‘public’ and ‘private’, ‘black’ and ‘white’, or as we will go on to discuss, ‘activist’ or ‘academic’) are dissolved into the ambiguity of the overlapping centre (or third) section, the third space. From this space it is possible to take a new position in relation to existing polarities, as well as gain a new perspective on these subjects.



**Figure 2:1. Beyond the politics of polarity: a diagrammatical representation of third space.**



The notion of third space thus emancipates our understanding of political space, moving it away from the rigidity of the politics of polarity. As a consequence, our notions of space become more open, diverse and plural. A number of geographers have engaged with this new innovation in spatial understanding. Soja (1996) mobilises 'thirdspace' in order to make explicit the link between individuals' (multiple) locational identities and their political lives. In Soja's own words;

'Mobilizing this objective is a belief that the spatial dimension of our lives has never been of greater practical and political relevance than it is today. Whether we are attempting to deal with the increasing intervention of electronic media in our daily routines; seeking ways to act politically to deal with the growing problems of... environmental degradation; or trying to understand the multiplying geopolitical conflicts around the globe, we are becoming increasingly aware that we are, and always have been, intrinsically spatial beings, active participants in the social construction of our embracing spatialities. Perhaps more than ever before a strategic awareness of this collectively created spatiality and its social consequences has become a vital part of making both theoretical and practical sense of our contemporary life-worlds at all scales, from the most intimate to the most global' (Soja, 1996:1).

Soja focuses on the 'social construction of our spatialities' through examining the 'other' set of selves that are opened up when binary oppositions are adapted, subverted and rejected. He is intent on creatively redefining and expanding our geographical imagination in new directions, and thirdspace's tentativeness and flexibility facilitates this desired effect; it is capable of, 'constantly shifting and changing [the] milieu of ideas, events, appearances, and meanings' (1996:3). Or as Soja states,

'[Thirdspace] opens up our spatial imaginaries to ways of thinking and acting politically that respond to all binarisms, to any attempt to confine thought and political action to only two alternatives, by interjecting another set of choices' (1996:5).

The move towards a 'third' perspective that is radically open to the collection of new insights is also identifiable in post-colonial and feminist theory. Here writers such as Spivak (1990) and Anzaldúa (1987), and hooks (1990) and Rose (1993), use third space notions in order to give 'voices' to the silenced minorities who inhabit 'in-between' spaces. hooks sees this conscious move away from the cultural norms of modernism to rupture and 'create gaps that make space for oppositional practices' (1990:31). These moves to the margin, to spaces of radical openness, aim to erode the monolithic and homogeneous and replace them with the diverse and multiple. In other words, they enable a 'new cultural politics of difference' (ibid.). Sharp et al (2000) also attempt to rupture dualistic understandings of political space, with particular reference to political 'power'. Sharp et al engage with the multiplicities that are opened up when polarities of 'domination' and 'resistance' are dissolved by mobilising the spatial metaphor of an 'entanglement'. For Sharp et al, domination and resistance are not to be



understood as polar opposites, but as existing simultaneously in an entangled fashion within any political act or space. The practice of power thus involves entangled 'spatialised threads' of both domination and resistance. As Sharp et al state;

'the image of knotted threads is intended to underline the deep 'spatiality' of this spinning together of domination and resistance within power. We talk about 'entanglements' to indicate that the domination/resistance couplet is always played out in, across, and through the many spaces of the world...entanglements flag the countless material spaces, places, and networks which sustain, practically as well as imaginatively and symbolically, the knottings that are the subject of our attention' (2000:1).

Pile (1994) also attempts to move beyond the limits of binary conceptualisations through using the notion of third space; in this instance, Pile uses third space to illustrate the repositioning that geographers have explored in order to transcend the politics of polarity in a range of guises. Pile states,

'the idea draws on a spatial metaphor which suggests an alternative radical geography which mobilises place, politics and hybrid identities... radical geography through its longstanding concern for place, politics and difference, is ideally placed to become a source of an emancipatory politics of location.... This geography would be made possible in part by treating the social construction of dualisms as part of the problem, and it can do so by recognising places beyond the grounds of dissimilarity - these can be collectively named the third space (Pile, 1994:264).

Pile's conception of 'third space' complements the following view of space-identity relations voiced by Moore (in Jones and Moss, 1995:101);

'as for politics...space, like identity, is contingent, differentiated, and relational, and...it thus makes little sense to conceive of any space as stabilised, fixed, and therefore outside of the possibility of counter hegemony. In this view, all space-identity formations are imbued with oppositional potential. And thus a practical task for politics is to activate this potential denaturalisation, exposure, and contestation so as to achieve new appropriations and articulations of space and identity.'

It can be seen therefore that taking place through resistance politicises space in new ways and invokes a continual struggle for power within these sites (see Sharp et al, 2000). This creation of 'third space' leads to the emergence of new spatial positions, as well as new political identities. These positions and identities have the potential to transcend the hegemonic context in which they develop as they can, according to Bhabha, 'displace the histories that constitute [them], and set up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom' (1994:9). Third spaces thus allow new conceptions of public and private to be distinguished through creating an 'in-between' space where new forms of collaboration can occur between political actants, producing altogether new, fused, political selves.

The notion of third space opens up alternative readings of resistance, especially in terms of

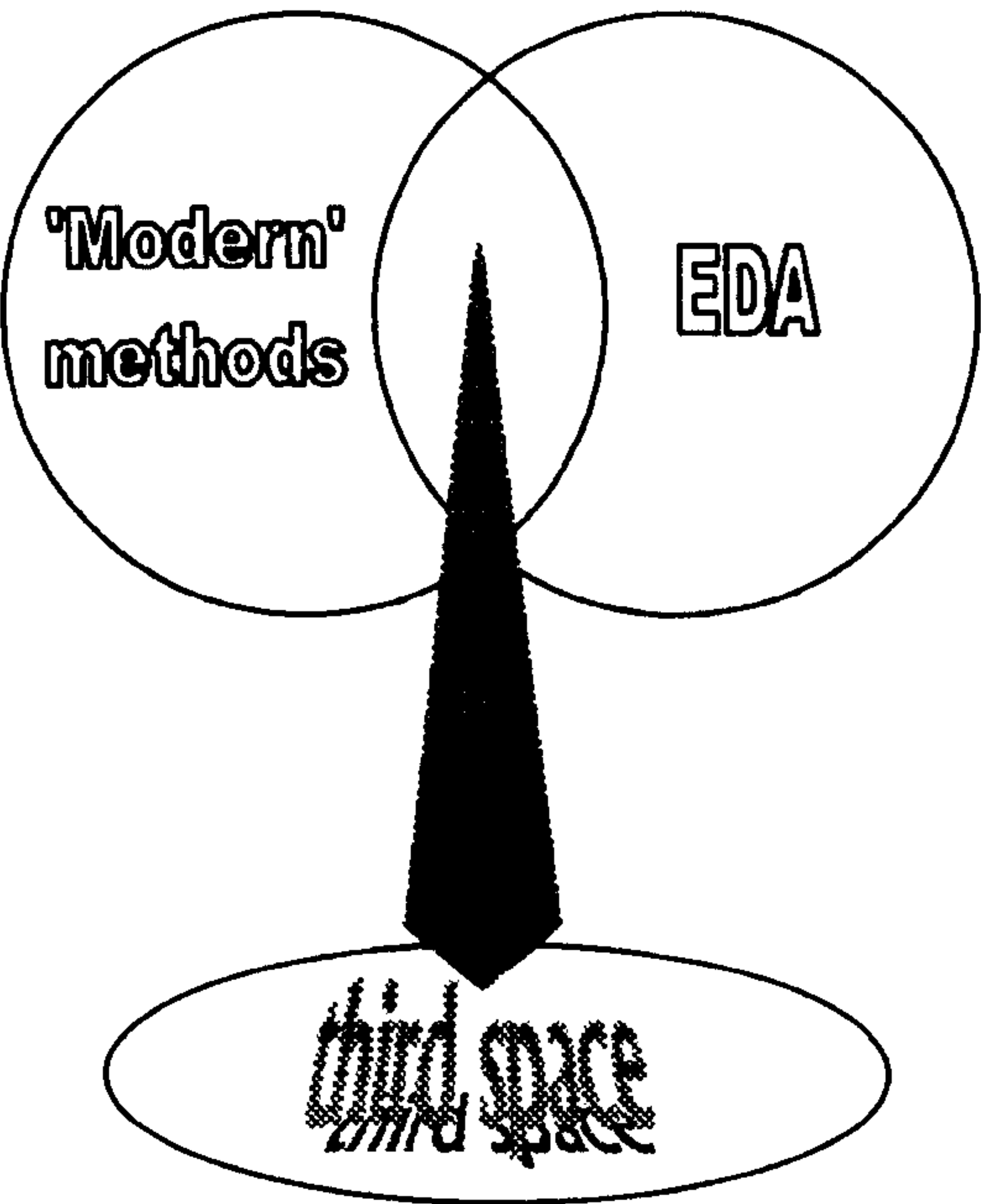


Environmental Direct Action and the democratic deficits of modern liberal democracy. In the light of third space, environmental resistance can be seen to be 'otherwise than modernity' (after Bhabha, 1994:6), it can be contingent, discontinuous or in contention with modern systems. In Soja's terms, resistance can be seen as simply 'anti-modernist' (i.e. seeking the 'annihilation' of the 'entire enlightenment project' (1996:4)), 'anti-postmodernist' (entailing a retreat to a 'vacuous anything goes' philosophy), or an attempt to free identities from the 'simple inversion of the relation of oppressor and oppressed [or] negative image and positive image' (1996:19). The ways in which EDA takes space for oppositional practices and constructs combinatorial rather than polarised communities of resistance will be examined in detail in the following chapters, thus providing evidence of the challenge that Environmental Direct Action constitutes to the modern system of liberal democracy. In summary therefore, the notion of third space aids our understanding of the spatiality of resistance, and EDA in particular, through emancipating our geographical imagination from the rigidity of dualistic thinking. It facilitates our ability to engage with the challenges that EDA poses not only to conventional political practices, but also to traditional spaces of politics. Third space allows us to rethink the relations between geography, resistance and political community, and the new (political) spaces that such evolving relations make possible. The following chapter engages with the implications that third space perspectives have had on academic positionality and conventional forms of knowledge production as the methodological approach required to gain an understanding of EDA is examined.



**Chapter Three. Researching (in) Third spaces: methodological principles & practices.**

As noted in Chapter One, this thesis attempts to be sensitive to the languages, meanings and strategies of the various actors encompassed in the research space. This methodological approach directly requires sensitivity to the discursive and practical strategies of Environmental Direct Activists, the method of the mainstream media, as well as being reflexive of my own location throughout this thesis (i.e. the position of academia). This chapter outlines the methodological approach of this research in two sections; the first section, methodological principles, describes the issues encountered in adapting tools for research that were derived predominantly from the cultural norms of modernism. The problems created for researching counter-cultural actions using these tools will be described. It will be argued that as a result of these problems, an alternative location had to be adopted for research into EDA. This methodological position is explored under the notion of ‘third space’. Building on Figure 2:1 (in Chapter Two), Figure 3:1 illustrates diagrammatically the methodological approaches used in this thesis. The research approach began from the ‘modern’ social science perspective (the left circle), but encountered significant problems when attempting to understand the arena of EDA (represented by the right circle). By maintaining this polarity certain (narrow) perspectives of EDA were retained, whereas, when the research approach gravitated to the third space approach, perspectives were attained that transcended the politics of polarity.



**Figure 3:1. Beyond the politics of polarity: a representation of third space methodology.**

The second section of this chapter outlines the methodological practices used to operationalise

this 'third space' in the context of my multi-sited ethnography centred at Ashton Court. It will describe the particular research tools applied in each 'space' of EDA resistance, including occupied physical spaces, media spaces and virtual spaces. Throughout this chapter (and the rest of the thesis) a number of different 'fonts' will be utilised to represent information gained from each different 'space' of EDA. The 'Courier New' font represents information gained through the virtual sphere, 'Letter Gothic' demarcates field diary information gained at the physical spaces of EDA, and newsprint formatting will be used where information was gleaned from the domain of the mainstream media.

### Methodological principles.

**'Things aren't all so tangible and sayable as people would usually have us believe; most experiences are unsayable, they happen in a space that no word has ever entered...'  
(Rilke, 1993:21).**

Following my first year of research for this PhD, a year consisting of reviewing a range of theoretical literatures, my approach to the issue of EDA had developed into one which bore the characteristic hallmarks of conventional 'scientific' inquiry. I perceived the issue to involve a problematic between environmental consciousness and practical action. I sought to discover the reasons why individuals thought as they did about the environment, and how and why they then translated this cognitive reasoning into practice. This is how I framed the question:

***'What is it about the 'environment' that gives rise to strong senses of ethical responsibility on behalf of individuals?'***

***This question specifically focuses on the process and practice of Environmental Direct Action. It seeks to explore and explain why individuals come to initially care about whether the environment is destroyed, how they then translate this concern into action, and why they choose a particular form of political action to articulate their concern.'***

***(Upgrade Report, Anderson, 1997)***

This approach presumes that there are rational motives underlying environmental concern, and logical, thought-out reasons for the translation of this thought into action<sup>1</sup>. In order to seek out these motives the initial empirical tools chosen were the more traditional variety; namely questionnaires and interviews. Figure 3:1 illustrates a few examples of the nature of the questions raised;

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<sup>1</sup> This methodological approach's separation of thought and action (in line with conventional configuration of rational cognition) parallels the specialisation and atomisation characteristics of Renaissance science as noted in Chapter Two.



Theme One specifically focuses on individual's environmental concern and action.

Why do you care about environmental issues?

- ☐ Economic self-interest (i.e. profit maximisation or property protection)
- ☐ Efficient resource use
- ☐ Conventional-religious stewardship
- ☐ For human survival / for future generations
- ☐ Emotional / spiritual attachment
- ☐ Intrinsic Value (caring for the environment for its own sake)
- ☐ Any other (please explain)

Please detail the nature of your concern:

Has the nature of your involvement in environmental action changed over time; if so, why?

Why did you turn your concern about the environment into action?

What has influenced your environmental views the most?

- ☐ Education
- ☐ Books
- ☐ Philosophical Ideas
- ☐ People
- ☐ Experiences
- ☐ Media Images
- ☐ Any other (please explain)

Please detail the nature of your influences:

**Figure 3:2. Excerpt from one of the virtual questionnaires posted to a range of EDA-ers. Full example in Appendix III.**

At the time my feelings towards this approach were mixed. During questionnaire formulation I frequently thought about how I would go about answering many of the questions based on my own environmental beliefs, and in most cases I found myself unable to do so. In a similar way to Cate Blanchett (below), I could not really translate my confused, impulsive and often irrational feelings into simple, definitive motivations.

*AB: What are you doing today?*

*CB: Interviews*

*AB: Do you hate it?*

*CB: Um...yeah...I do. After a while I do - everything I do is so unconscious and illogical and it's hard to make it conscious and logical*

*(Anna blundy calls...Cate Blanchett, in Blundy, 1998:8)*

Despite these concerns, the inertia of theoretical reviews had to be broken somehow and so the questionnaires were virtually posted. I had compiled a database of activists who had 'taken' cyberspace in order to represent their political identities, and the questionnaires were emailed to their 'wired' addresses. Their posting was coupled to a hope that seasoned activists would

find them easier to answer than I did. Generally they did not.

Sorry not to feel too happy with your categories, I guess that is a typical response from someone who sees the narrow reductionism/restriction of fitting the world into set categories as central to the current socio-environmental crisis

(From respondent1@email.address Fri Feb 6 17:18:37 1998)

I think caring about nature is the basic requirement of living happily on this planet. I care about nature because....because. Don't you think its weird to separate all those reasons into different categories, as if spiritual attachment and intrinsic value didn't go hand and hand?

(From respondent2@email.address Thu Feb 12 05:03:42 1998)

From the responses to the questionnaires, allied to my own misgivings over the format of my initial inquiry, it became clear that the questionnaire approach was hamstrung by two factors. Firstly, it was becoming clear that the traditionally informed social scientific approach that produced my questions was anathema to the philosophical approach to action adopted and experienced by many of the questioned activists. Complementing my own reflections when attempting to answer the questionnaire, it appeared that the motivations for many activists did not conform to a well-reasoned cognitive thought process. As a result I realised that, to paraphrase Soja, I had asked activists to respond exclusively in the language of the 'Second space epistemology' (1996:10), a language in which social geographers have been 'tightly socialised' (1996:11). I had assumed that all knowledge is comprehended essentially through the mind *res cognito* (through thought things) (ibid.:79). This rational sequence of 'thought-then-action' did not appear to correspond to the feelings and practices of EDA-ers. Motivations for action appeared to be internalised by some participants, and once felt, were rarely interrogated further (see Chapter Four). In this way EDA-ers seemed to conform to an approach that has more in common with a 'practical ethics' position (see for example Singer, 1993, or Plumwood, 1993), rather than a regimented 'ethical' system in the conventional tradition (see for example Hooker (in Cooper & Palmer, 1992:147).

The activists' approach seemed more aligned to those expressed in EDA literature, for example Abbey's direct action novel, 'The Monkey Wrench Gang', and Dave Foreman's personal account of his exploits as an Earth Firster in the USA;

*"Do we know what we're doing and why?"*

*'No.'*

*'Do we care?'*

*'We'll work it out as we go along. Let our practice form our doctrine, thus assuring precise theoretical coherence'* (Abbey, 1991:68),

*'Action is key. Action is more important than philosophical hairsplitting or endless refining of our dogma. Let our actions set the finer points of our philosophy'* (Foreman, 1991:20).



The limits I encountered with this rationally cognitive approach to research were neatly summarised in a virtual chat I had with an activist / student friend in America on these issues. A portion of this conversation follows;

One suggestion centers on your questionnaire... what KIND of questionnaire is it? Is it too much like the sort you get in a doctor's office or like the sort you get from the government pollsters which ask you stupid questions like 'how did you first become interested in being a member of the Democratic Party'?? My guess is these 'fringe' groups would resent a questionnaire of that sort.... My reason for suggesting this is I can remember when I was in high school and got in trouble for pot smoking, drug use, etc. and in detention I had to fill out a couple of questionnaires from god know where about 'Teenagers and pot', you know... how much per week, when was my first time, was it peer pressure from a, b, or c sources, why did I smoke at school, a, b, c... and so on. My friends and I thought it was so stupid... and I think it was a study done by one of the psychology departments at the local uni... What I thought was that whoever wrote the questionnaire was some geeky stiff who had never smoked and/or wanted to put my life and my problems so that it neatly fit on some graph or supported his pre-existing conclusion that pot use is prevalent and on the rise amongst high school students. It never seemed that anyone was interested in what I had to say about the matter... and it was DIFFICULT to answer the questions because, quite honestly, I wasn't really SURE why I did what I did, or how I started, or if I did it to impress my friends... I just did it, that simple. If the questioner had done his questions differently... so that I could say my piece, or done it in such a way that it sounded like he was genuinely interested and wasn't going to make a fool of me or use what I said against me... he probably could have disregarded all the personal stuff and gathered all the 'reasons' I did what I did from that... it would just take more shifting through. In short, if the questioner had done his questions differently, he would have gotten the data he needed, and there may in fact BE a pattern underneath it all.  
(From friend@email.address Fri Jan 30 15:18:07 1998)

Implied in the above extract is the second factor that hamstrung the questionnaire approach to EDA. This second factor was the inherently impersonal and mediated nature of this empirical method. This kind of research tool served to reinforce the distance between academics and activists and did nothing to challenge the assumed framing held by each group of the other.

Jon Anderson, where have you been all of my life (or at least since the last two issues?). Somehow we received your dissertation proposal over email and someone thought it funny enough to put in the unprinted read and comment file (potential articles). I thought your proposal was so hilarious I tried to find your email address by doing a web search (which is a lot of effort for me because I hate all things computer-related.)

What does direct action have to do with geographical sciences?  
(From respondent2@emailaddress Thu Feb 12 05:03:42 1998)



**'Well, [academia] sums up everything that is wrong with the printed word. How it is easy to change, distort, revamp, omit, edit and corrupt... SchNEWS is written by activists - not academics... [It is] our words - words of people actually out there doing it - in black and white and cyberspace for the academics, historians and analysts to pick over the bones with and come up with amazing theories about our 'glorious movement'' (SchNEWSround, 1997:5).**

From responses to my questionnaire, as well as from opinions stated in more general EDA publications, it was becoming clear that activists were increasingly aware of the mistranslation and misunderstanding of EDA arising through the dominant strains of knowledge production, and the level of 'recuperation' that was produced as a result. Consequently, academic approaches to the subject of EDA were seen by some activists as unwelcome. Looked at positively, this tentative foray into fieldwork provided information on how EDA-ers viewed academic inquiry, an important lesson in itself. Activists clearly did not welcome the academic approach I had adopted to inquiry, and as a consequence did not welcome me as a researcher. Needless to say, I took this often barbed criticism personally as their responses challenged the validity of my efforts over the first year of research. However, out of necessity, and over a period of months, I re-considered my position. My initial motivation for research into EDA was to gain an understanding of action in order that this could contribute in some small way to the broader struggle against environmental destruction. My approach complemented that stated by Kitchen & Hubbard (1999:198) who saw geographical study as being as much about changing the world as studying it. I reflected upon my motivation and the scientific approach I had developed toward this end. It was evident that, through adopting a rationally cognitive 'Second space' approach to understanding, a distance had been created between me and the everyday nature of EDA. To paraphrase Choinard (1994), I had failed to 'connect with the trenches' of EDA. I had always considered that personal experience was crucial to an integrated understanding, and yet I had somehow misplaced this consideration through my concentration on rational cognition<sup>2</sup>. In short, I realised that through operating from the location of

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<sup>2</sup>In the words of Thrift (1987:405) I had supplanted the 'searchlight' of understanding for the 'hand torch' of rational theory. With this metaphor in mind, Abbey's words 'illuminate' this notion further: 'There's another disadvantage to the use of the flashlight: like many other mechanical gadgets it tends to separate a man from the world around him. If I switch it on my eyes adapt to it and I can see only the small pool of light which it makes in front of me; I am isolated. Leaving the flashlight in my pocket where it belongs, I remain a part of the environment I walk through and my vision though limited has no sharp or definite boundary' (1968:13).

The importance of using the 'searchlight' rather than the 'torch' for EDA research became absolutely clear to me after I had spent about 2 months living 24 hours a day on a protest camp (and 4 months in total being involved). During a week of sleep deprivation due to security guard pranks - culminating in physical attack on me and my bender - I felt 'burned out' for the first time. After experiencing that sort of involvement, of establishing connections with people and place that such an experience implies, and going back for more after a week or so off site, gave me an insight that a non-participant could not understand. At this point I understood why such antipathy is engendered towards academics who state that their distanced view is the first and final comment on the movement, because without this experience their comment cannot be said to be based on all the information. This incident recalled to me Northrup's comments (an ex-slave in the USA) which were quoted by Scott (1990); 'men may... discourse flippantly from armchairs of the pleasures of slave life; but let them toil with him in the



'modernist epistemologies' (Soja, 1996:80) I had tacitly silenced other 'post-modern' knowledges. As a result, I considered that a much more rigorous interrogation of my research approach must occur in order to understand EDA appropriately.

I considered that in order to understand EDA appropriately it would be self-defeating to continue to 'misplace' my personal motivations, and consequently I should locate myself explicitly within my research<sup>3</sup>. I acknowledged that I was not a neutral mediator of transparent, universal 'truths' – 'a solitary knower' - but a situated being, determining the focus of research in response to particular motivations, impulses and objectives. Echoing the sentiments of McDowell (1994:241), I concluded that,

'knowledge is positional...and that there is a politics as well as a poetics in the production of texts...[that] the unchallenged authority of the disembodied scholar, untouched by relations of power or social attributes (let alone feelings of jealousy, envy, doubt, love, possession) has been burst asunder once and for all'.

Furthermore, I considered it crucial to attempt to integrate all feelings, experiences and emotions related to EDA into the study, rather than just the valorised 'half' of the dominant dualisms - the 'male' characteristics of reason and rationality. Due to the non-cognitive elements that apparently combine to motivate EDA, it now seemed appropriate to venture into the 'outskirts of our rationality' where, 'passions darker, wilder forms still prowl' (Game, 1997:4), in order to integrate the 'debased' characteristics of the 'body' - emotion, intuition and irrationality into the study. Following this consideration, I also questioned the relevance of the deliberately impersonal language utilised in scientific discourse. If scientism's pretension to objective truth and position as the hegemonic form of knowledge (following Game & Metcalfe (1996:88)) was no longer deemed appropriate for this study, it was also no longer necessary to be restrained by such, 'paralyzing strictures of academic style' (Braidotti, 1994:30). However, this re-consideration of research approach did require, as Massey (1994) notes, an engagement with important issues regarding who and how we are 'academic'. It raised, as McDowell has suggested, 'a liberating and enormously challenging set of questions about what we teach, to whom and on whose behalf' (1994:241). Routledge (1996:401) has taken up these questions by presenting a balanced critique of current academic positionality, he states,

'Intellectuals are not without complicity in a variety of oppressive structures and relations...the language we use is frequently elitist', but equally, 'the academy is a privileged location that affords intellectuals the possibility of various kinds of political action...academia can also serve as a political site from which various struggles can be constructively critiqued.'

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field...behold him scourged, hunted, trampled on, and they will come back with another story in their mouths.'

<sup>3</sup>This would hopefully ground me in reality, rather than let me allow me to concentrate exclusively on intellectual theory (or 'headwanking' as an activist refers to it, in Maxey (1999:205)).

Thus it became increasingly clear that my reorientation of research approach could build upon the positive elements of academia, whilst finding new ways to,

'deconstruct the barrier between the academy and the lives of the people it professes to represent, so that scholarly work interprets and effects social change...[we must] attempt to negotiate a place within and between the roles [of activist and geographer]' (1996:400).

I set out therefore to attempt to find some device that would enable me to open up the terrain of academic research approaches and explore new analytical spaces<sup>4</sup>. The new analytical terrain required for this thesis needed to be capable of translating between forms of knowledge production associated with the skills and conventions of good research, and the everyday 'hands-on' knowledges of activists. It was required to integrate the immediate world of experience which influences human feelings and agency, with the critical theories of academia. In the words of Halfacree (1999:209), a space had to be found so that 'theory and practice [can] be regarded as complementary'. In short, this analytical terrain had to allow me to traverse the boundaries between the territories of 'academia' and 'activism'; As Routledge puts it, my new approach needs to,

'enact a third space within and between academia and activism [in an] attempt to live theory in the immediate' (Routledge, 1996:401).

### The Third Space.

I realised that in order to explore the 'third spaces' of environmental resistance, it was prudent to explicitly reposition myself in an ambiguous political space - itself a 'third space'. Perhaps the most useful commentary on the methodological principles of third space is that of Routledge (1996). Through his involvement as a local resident against the M77 motorway in Scotland, and his noted academic work on forms of popular resistance, he developed a concern to, 'cross between the locations of academia and activism'. His belief that the personal is both textual and political informed his conception of the spheres of academia and activism, viewing them in this case as, 'interwoven' and capable of influencing one another - rather than as distinct, 'pure, authentic spaces' (see also Plows, 1997, and Cook & Crang, 1995). Taking such a view thus led to the subversion of traditional conceptions of absolute activist, or absolute academic, it invoked relative positions 'in-between' these two theoretical extremes - a 'third space'. The

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<sup>4</sup> According to the social movements mailing list, the task of finding a terrain to appropriately link academia and activism is not only sought by some academics, but some activists too; From respondent7@email.address Wed May 27 15:09:33 1998: 'I hope there's a "third way" b/c we desperately need it'. At 04:27 PM 26-05-98 -0700, A.J.Plows wrote: 'even the most radical of us are constrained by the way academia dictates that research, papers, concepts etc should be written. Is there a "Third Way"??!!'



construction of this third space facilitated the, 'disruption of both sites [activism and academia] in both directions, whereby each may learn to 'occupy the subject positions of the other' (Spivak, 1990:121), and in doing so create something else, something other than 'academia' or 'activism' (Routledge, 1996:2)<sup>5</sup>. Occupying the third space meant the habitation of a space that is clearly fluid and dynamic, where neither oppositional site holds the locus of power, and where each extreme continually subverts the meaning of the other (1996:401). Recognition of such a position complements the view promulgated by Cook and Crang (1995:7);

'many have argued that researchers should conceptualise themselves as well as the people they study as variously positioned, interconnected, and capable of changing, as well as being changed by, the societies in which they/we live. So rather than claiming some sort of separate Archimedean point from which the world can be critiqued, the researcher's viewpoint is largely a product of social relations both within the academy and between it and the world at large'.

Third space acknowledges the nomadic, ambivalent and often contradictory quality of thought and opinion (as experienced through the occupation of numerous subject positions before, during and after EDA fieldwork). Recognition of the 'intersubjective' nature of experience thus enables the researcher (me) to understand the multifarious processes that interweave to produce different versions of events and activities articulated by the relevant individuals involved.

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<sup>5</sup> Thinking of a third space as critical engagement, Routledge is drawn to Escher's picture entitled 'reptiles' to provide an illustrative example of this process of 'third spacing':



In the picture, as Routledge states, 'reptiles emerge from a two dimensional drawing pad to become three dimensional lizards climbing an ever-ascending staircase. Eventually they recompose upon the drawing pad again as two dimensional reptiles. I find this image helpful in focusing on how, for example, academic writing could merge into action and back again into writing' (1996:406). For myself, I envision this third spacing as a shoreline, as a meeting point of many different elements - sea, land, air. This location is constantly moving, interacting, and changing its composition. It reflects Capra's notion (1997) that it is the place where one can feel most alive as it is the place where intellect, spirit and the physical body meet. In this third space, one can remain motionless, but still change due to the movement of tides and wind, or one can themselves move, and relations are again blurred.



Locating myself at the 'margin' of Modern academic inquiry invokes what Soja has called a 'thirdspace epistemology' (1996:81). It involves a radical scepticism towards, and restructuring of, established ways of knowing. It reflects the need for academic inquiry to always, 'move on to new possibilities and places' (1996:82), or in the words of Snyder, to, 'meander like a great river leaving oxbow traces over forgotten beds... [to act] as some kind of infinitely interfertile family of species spreading or mysteriously declining over time, shamelessly and endlessly hybridizing, changing its own rules as it goes' (1990:7).

Routledge envisions that the occupation of third space and the invocation of a third space epistemology alters the traditional conceptions of academic and activists in the following ways (1996:409): the third space involves,

- i) having what hooks (1994:54) terms an 'ethics of struggle' that informs academics' relationships to those folk 'who have not had access to ways of knowing shared in locations of privilege;'
- ii) making theory accessible to those outside the academy, and in doing so disrupting the notion that the only appropriate theoretical work is that which is 'highly abstract, jargonistic, difficult to read and containing obscure references (hooks, 1994:64);
- iii) enacting theory as a liberating practice both within and without the academy to call into question political assumptions and relations of determination upon which repressive practices are founded (McLaren, 1995)
- iv) combining theory and practice in order to disrupt and de-center disciplinary, institutional, authorial, and discursive boundaries (Giroux and McLaren, 1994)
- v) embodying knowledge by reinscribing the body – our bodies – into academia so that we can speak about ourselves as acting, positioned subjects (see hooks, 1994:139-140).

I feel Routledge's vision of the third space resonates strongly not only with my own predisposition towards research, but also with an approach that would be able to gain a good understanding of environmental activism. I had come to realise the necessity of the integration of theory and practice (or thought and action) in my research (echoing the call of Halfacree, 1999); I had realised that it is only through this integration that a 'resonant' understanding of EDA could be gained<sup>6</sup>. Allied to this, an investigation of EDA from this space would enable me to not only employ appropriate methods, but also create a product that attempts to transcend the divisive separation between academia and activism. It could do this through affording the researcher space to break the 'rigid, fossilised' strictures of modern methods, it would allow academics to [re]explore our 'somewhere else' our 'other emotional, sensual, and political

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<sup>6</sup>I envisioned this 'resonant understanding' through the use of Roszak's description of the Ivan Illich's near death experience (1989:380): 'It is in the feel of the words as they pass through his mind and in the power they have acquired to change his life. The words are the same, but now when Ivan ponders them, there is a resonance that was not here before. The meaning is in the resonance. And the resonance swells within him until it rocks the foundations of his life'. I have also found Thoreau's perspective of this issue useful, one he retells in Civil Disobedience; 'I speak understandingly on this subject, for I have made myself acquainted with it both theoretically and practically' (1983:83).



spaces... that are excluded from our [current] academic work' (after Spivak, 1990:14). Through occupying third space it would be possible to 'live theory in the immediate', and attempt the balancing of critical rigour and the need for direct experience. From these immediate encounters the researcher would be able to employ a 'language of lived experience... a poetry of action wherein we invest our words and signs so powerfully with living reality that all other are pulled out of place' (Vaneigem, 1983:75). This language of lived experience would stem from the many positions taken by the researcher in the course of study, it could adopt the critical edge of the academic, whilst also integrating the voice of 'the researched' into the mix. As Routledge suggests such a language could, 'approach resistance through the voices of its participants rather than through the exclusive mediation of elite and establishment discourse' (1996:412). Through the blending of styles of articulation and understanding, accurate representations of activists' alternative perceptions of their inner and outer worlds could be explored (see Furlong, 1996); the problems of the 'scientific' approach illustrated above, along with the 'traditions of silence' and acts of 'nullification' (Hecht & Simone, 1994:83) that characterise academia's take on environmental action could be overcome. Finally, research from this third space would thus constitute not some form of 'universal truth' which can be transferred to passive recipients, it would be a transparent, dynamic understanding of the situation, involving the recipient being active in judging between the contested nature of the information provided;

'the 3rd space... implies a multiplicity of voices providing a mosaic of images of reality that do not necessarily produce a synthesis. Rather, they articulate the ambiguous and contested character of that reality. Only fragments of the reality they try to articulate' (Routledge, 1996:414).

The style of record for the third space would thus not be one of permanence, but a transient, 'rolling document' offering not the definitive final word on events, but a contribution to an ongoing, evolving understanding<sup>7</sup>. This third space approach could also perhaps go some way to challenge EDA-ers assumptions about the nature of academic methods, as well as disrupting established notions of 'action' that characterise EDA (see the chapters that follow). With all this in mind, what specific methods are relevant to operationalise the new analytical terrain opened up by the third space? This question is answered in the next section of this chapter.

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<sup>7</sup>As Abbey, in his description of a season in the desert wilderness, suggests, 'since you cannot get the desert into a book any more than a fisherman can haul up the sea with his nets, [one should try] to create a world of words in which the desert figures more as medium than as material. Not imitation but evocation [should] be the goal' (1975:XII).



Researching (In) Third spaces: methodological practices.

A Qualitative Method.

Although it appears to be the current academic trend to avoid compounding the dualism between qualitative and quantitative methods (itself a worthy aim), it is nevertheless the case that qualitative methods were predominately used in the practice of this thesis. It is argued that qualitative methods were altogether more appropriate for this research's conduct for a variety of reasons; initially, as Hakim confirms, they reflected the social agency aspect of the investigation,

'qualitative research is concerned with individual's own accounts of their attitudes, motivations and behaviour. It offers richly descriptive reports of individual's perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, views and feelings, the meanings and interpretations given to events and things, as well as their behaviour; [It] displays how these are put together, more or less coherently and consciously, into frameworks which make sense of their experiences and illuminates the motivations which connect attitudes and behaviour, or how conflicting attitudes and motivations are resolved in particular choices made' (Hakim, 1987:26).

It is not true to say however, that the adoption of a predominately qualitative approach entailed a retreat into 'methodological individualism' (the view that all explanation can be reduced to accounts at the level of the self-directing individual (after *ibid.*)), indeed the opposite is the case: this thesis attempted to adopt a 'social realist' perspective to events. As Redclift & Benton (1994:8) explain, instead of viewing society as nothing over and above an aggregation of individuals, this more 'holistic' outlook tends to emphasise ways in which, 'individual behaviour is shaped by wider collectivities or normative frameworks within which individuals are situated'. This view is particularly relevant for research connected with environmental issues as the latter,

'affect the terms of the debate by showing that societies are not just composed of individual human beings. It is necessary to analyse and explain the ways in which human social structures bind together not only people but also (non-human) animals, physical objects, spatial 'envelope's, and so on' (*ibid*:12).

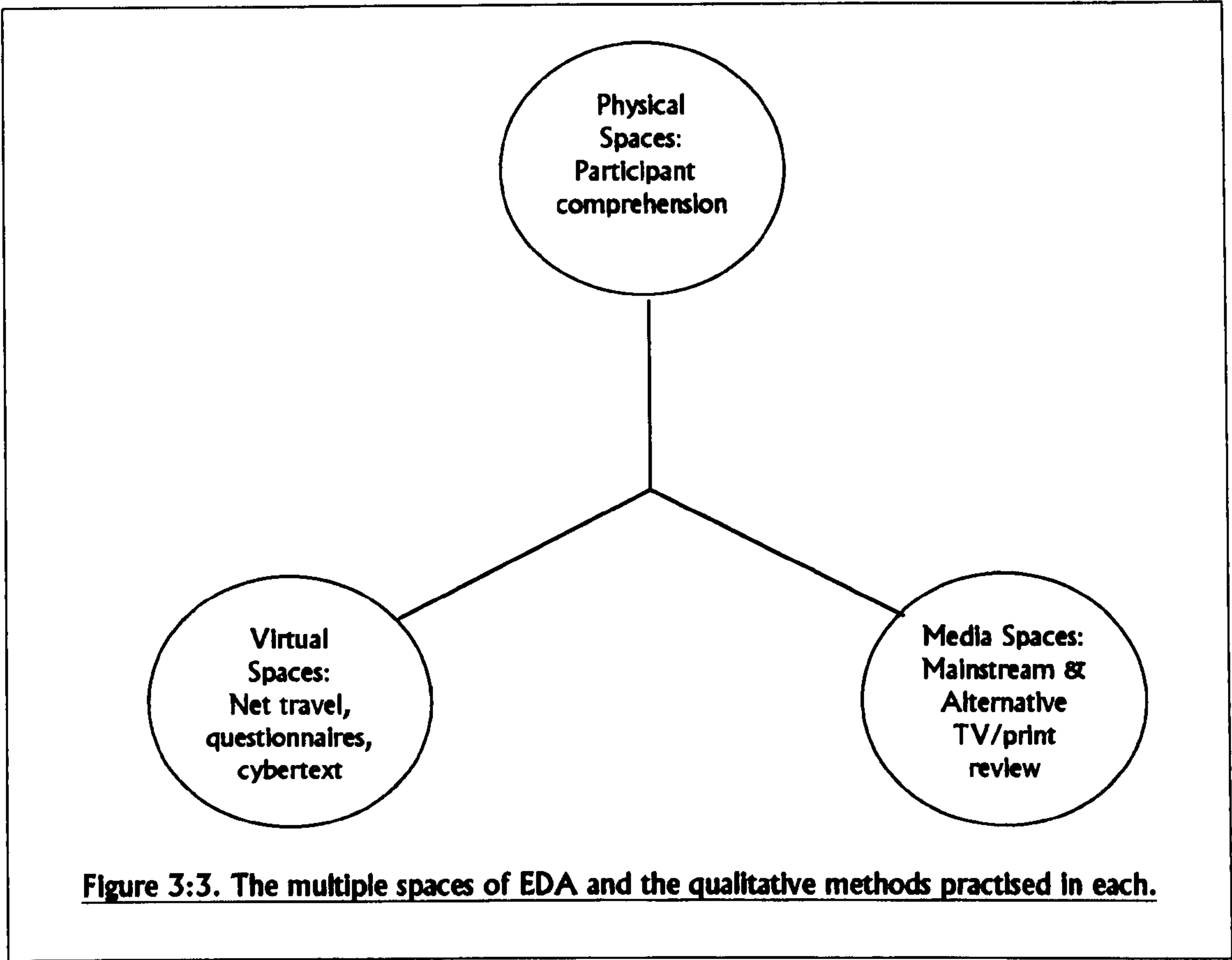
Thus for environmental research in particular, the combination of qualitative methods from a social realist perspective has great benefit. When integrating into this portfolio of interests that of the political, the context of action, this approach can also be seen to dovetail neatly, as Hakim outlines,

'If one is looking at the way people respond to...external social realities at the micro level, accommodating themselves to the inevitable, re-defining the situation until it is acceptable or comfortable, kicking against constraints, or fighting to break out of them, or even to change them, then qualitative research is necessary. If survey's offer the bird's eye view, qualitative research offers the worm's eye view' (Hakim, 1987:28).



Methodological practice and multi-sited ethnography.

A number of qualitative methods were used to put this research into operation. The following diagram illustrates the tools used in each space of the EDA study.



Methodological practice and the physical spaces of EDA: Overt research.

Due to the potential for friction in the relationship between academia and activism, it was of the utmost importance for me as the researcher to interrogate my own positionality. One element of this process of introspection centred on whether I ought to reveal my true positionality in the field - i.e. should I take a covert or overt position for research? I felt that the stance taken for research had to enable me to openly position myself in the 'third' space which complemented my chosen approach and methods. I felt a covert position would preclude this option as it entailed a deception, and perhaps even a betrayal of trust, between academic and activist. Through 'coming clean' about research positions, and the new configurations attempted in light of the third space notion, I (alongside wider academia in general) avoided being tarred with the same brush of suspicion that covers individuals who take



more than a passing interest in protest activities<sup>8</sup>. Being overt thus allowed activists an opportunity to establish my 'integrity' on their own terms. My authenticity and 'undisputed origin' could be traced, which opened up the possibility of 'total participation' (Ganz, in Burgess, 1994:163) in protest activities. If, and when, this possibility was denied by activists, the nature of this denial in itself gave an indispensable insight into how activists treat relationships to researchers (and me in particular), and the level of trust imparted to them (me).

The physical spaces of action that were chosen for study were the EDA camps as Ashton Court, near Bristol (the reasons why these spaces were chosen for the multi-sited ethnography have been outlined in Chapter One). In practice, as I was aware of the potential for friction between 'academics' and 'activists' I was rather apprehensive going up to the Ashton Court site for the first time (so much so, in fact, that I thought better of it the first time around and had to return on a second occasion). My fears were (slightly) overcome due to the 'virtual gatekeepers' constructed by the EDA campaign. The 'Save Ashton Court' (<http://www.gn.apc.org/cycling/ashtoncourt>) & Bristol Friends of the Earth (<http://www.joolz.demon.co.uk>) websites both encouraged participation in the action campaign, and I saw this as my 'in'. The following is an extract from my fieldwork diary (itself discussed in a later section) that explains how I encountered academic / activist relations personally;

The first time up at site I got the impression that people had had a busy night and were relaxing with some pot... it didn't feel to be the right time to brazenly announce my 'two hats' as I referred to it. so I just helped out building the firepit...

The second time on site I was able to speak to one of the main activists who had helped to set it up. From a number of visitors I had met that day I ascertained that she had friends who were students. and that she had finished a degree herself quite recently. It seemed to be both a good person and a good opportunity to reveal my 'two hats'.

It went remarkably well: 'Jo'<sup>9</sup> suggested herself that maybe I could integrate this campaign into my research. We talked about some common issues that she had worked on in her time volunteering with FoE. and that I had studied for my MSc. and this common ground. allied to my participation in events (in what was a horribly cold and wet time of year) seemed to forge a good relationship (they kept asking when I was going to stay up there all the time. and how my work was going etc etc)

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<sup>8</sup>The placement of state stooges within EDA groups is quite prevalent, as Zakin (1993), or Lodge (1999) describe. Lodge cites a case at a Greenpeace London meeting where there were more stooges present than true activists. At Ashton Court however, there was only one incident when it thought that the police or council had tried to infiltrate the varied EDA spaces in the guise of an activist: a man in wellington boots arrived one evening asking odd questions, and was treated with a degree of aloofness by the activists. Afterwards the speculation was that he was attempting to 'spy' on the site, although the incident didn't seem to amount to anything, and the individual never returned.

<sup>9</sup> The names used for activists are all pseudonyms.



(Appendix I: 1/2).

**A later entry detailed some of the reasons why perhaps I had found this move from academic / activist relatively painless;**

Good points of my integration: I enjoy similar interests / locality / language / clothes / ages / student history etc from most other activists here i.e. I'm not that different from them at all. This has made it easier for me to 'survive' in this 'place of risk' (i.e. this third space) and it has made it easier for the 'other' activists to accept me...

perhaps more importantly I get accepted cos I do things. I sit in the rain all day with them getting cold. I risk myself up a tree putting up the treehouse. I muck in. I'm there. I'm human. I'm their mate... offer them showers, food etc (Appendix I:4).

**Thus, my experience illustrated to me that the assumed distance between academics and activists did not hold when face-to-face relations had been established. At this point it was not whether the individuals were from an ivory tower or from Mars, the relations thrived or died on whether those concerned had interests in common, showed respect, and were willing to get involved. Proof of my 'acceptance' into activist circles came in a number of ways, as the following diary excerpts outline;**

after maybe 3 day long visits. I felt I had increasing 'authenticity'. Was left in charge (with another activist) of the fire pit as others went to get some firewood. Thus when visitors came, we were the ones whose place it was to welcome them, explain the issues to them etc. i.e. I was trusted enough by this time to do this on behalf of the camp... (Appendix I:5).

I recieved an email from 'badger helen', welcoming me to site, really offering me help - 'i'd love to know more about your phd topic sometime...maybe i can help you by filling details of the AC [Ashton Court] campaign from the start 2/3 years ago...have you checked our website?' (Appendix I:5).

...Got logs on way home - I called it home! ...'dan' says that I ought to write a diary - I'd have anecdotes to back up points I want to make for the phd, he like most of the others is vaguely interested in it...I get funny looks from people in Long Ashton [local village where the site got supplies] - kinda weird. I'm a pixie protester now... (Appendix I:6).

'bee' and 'jo' are chatting and hint something about the proximity of the meadow to the new camp [Bulgaria]. 'have you measured it yet?' bee asks. I don't know what she is talking about. im not IN on this yet... (Appendix I:14).

'scott' calls me over when I'm passing Bulgaria and he tells me about the tunnel that is going to built under the meadow [ie what jo and bee were talking about yesterday]. The tunnel has been codenamed 'dino', so we can talk about it onsite without casual visitors or security knowing about it - its a secret between the 7 of us who are going to build it... (Appendix I:14).



**Methodological practice and the physical spaces of EDA: Participant Comprehension.**

As implied by the above diary extracts, the methodology chosen for the actual protest site at Ashton Court involved me making this new space my temporary home. This methodology complemented the notions raised by the third space, directly those which advocated the oscillation between the spaces of 'academia' and 'activism'. The specific methodology chosen for this space developed almost naturally from the orientation and objectives of third space, but came to be formalised through Collins' work on 'participant comprehension' (in Bell & Roberts, 1984:54).

To have 'participant comprehension' is, according to Collins, to have acquired 'native competence'; to gain your own experience and share the 'experience of others with whom [you have] shared a small segment of [your] life' (ibid.). Instead of viewing participation as an 'unfortunate necessity', it becomes, 'central, irreplaceable and, indeed, the essence of the method' (ibid.:60). The way of life adopted by the researched becomes 'internalised' by the actual researcher, so through a process of 'participant introspection' the distinction between the observer and observed is blurred.

Complementing the benefits of third space (as outlined above), a number of positive elements accrued from the formal adoption of participant comprehension. As Bell & Roberts observe, 'the great virtue of Collins' model is that it makes more visible the nature of the compromises involved in most (framework) research decisions' (1984:54). For example, the difficulties inherent in attempting to maintain a 'complete observer' or 'observer as participant' (after Gold, in Burgess 1995) role, principally due to the dynamic contexts in which research is conducted, are not hidden using this approach. Rather the problems encountered by researchers due to their combining dual positionalities (as academic and citizen) are illuminated and used to illustrate crucial aspects of the research's aims. For example, how the researcher's opinions and feelings towards specific protests change when their position is developed from being a passive citizen 'off-site', to an active citizen 'on-site', and then back again can be integrated into the research mix. These first-hand experiences, presumably comparable to those which may be felt by others at the site, can be used to reinforce or critique the wider debates raised by the research. As Ganz (in Burgess 1995:54) implies, this personal element is a positive contribution to method, 'participant observation is one of the most personal of all sociological research methods, and little can or should be done to eliminate the personal element'.

Stanley (1991) argues that the illumination of the researchers' dynamic positionalities transfers accountability to the knowledge produced through this method. Essentially, as is noted by Plows (1998), this illumination is a process of demystification, enabling the reader/the researched to have a holistic appreciation of how the finished research was arrived at. The internalisation of lifestyle promoted by the participant comprehension approach also allows the



researcher to 'get down to business' quickly (after Plows, 1998). It enables confident evaluations to be made concerning the status of information received on site as the researcher is able to discriminate between important situations and misinformation (deliberate or otherwise)<sup>10</sup>. The participant comprehension approach also takes credit by default as it does not involve the weaknesses of 'unobtrusive observation', Collins' alternative approach which amounts to the observer becoming a 'fly on the wall'. Alongside the theoretical limits of this latter approach (popularly defined by the Heisenberg principle) this approach would be very difficult to carry out in practice by this researcher as being a mute witness to something that one considers to be wrong would be an impossible position to maintain.

This approach is not, however, without its negative points. One crucial factor in successfully undertaking participant comprehension is the availability of time. It is clear that a significant amount of time is required to adequately internalise a different lifestyle - the length of time required though is, of course, dependant on a number of factors: for example, the researcher's 'literacy' of activism, and the representativeness of stay. It is felt that although such time-spans are open to conjecture, this method, if adopted appropriately, will produce a different, indeed qualitatively better, form of information and understanding than, for example, an isolated interview or questionnaire. As stated in Chapter One, I was involved in the EDA campaign at Ashton Court for a year, which allowed me to experience the instigation, operation and closure of the campaign. As a result, I felt a relatively comprehensive and representative experience of EDA was attained<sup>11</sup>.

Another potential drawback through the use of participant comprehension is the impossibility of maintaining an 'objective' stance for research. Although many writers have exposed the fallacy of objectivism, the goal of 'rigour' needs still to be aimed for<sup>12</sup>. This approach could produce problems related to the researcher being too close to the action to be able to effectively comment or criticise it - a problems perhaps of 'going native'<sup>13</sup>. This may

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<sup>10</sup> The value of practical first-hand experience of EDA was illustrated to me during one evening on field-site. A student came to site and introduced themselves as a researcher on the influence of 'magic' on sites. At this point, approximately half of the activists on site remembered that they had pressing jobs to do, such as wood collection or washing up. Those that remained answered her questions willingly, but I was aware (from my experience of eco-magic from 3 months on site, and literacy on the subject before that), that the key 'magicians' on site were now absent, and the answers given by those that remained were clear 'mickey takes'. Once the questions were answered the researcher left, and life resumed as 'normal'. The researcher thus got her 'information', but I doubt that, due to her apparent lack of experience of how sites operate, exhibited in the poor research techniques used for the situation, she could decipher it adequately or attribute to it its true weight (i.e. none at all).

<sup>11</sup> A Native American visitor to Ashton Court suggested that it would take at least three months (but preferably six) to begin to understand her own Shoshone tribe on Turtle Island.

<sup>12</sup> Objectivity, according to Maynard (1996), needs to be replaced with 'rigour'. Rigour entails being: 'intellectually compelling', 'politically persuasive', 'policy relevant', & 'having meaning to others' (Wessex Conference for new PhD researchers, Guildford, 1996).

<sup>13</sup> What does 'going native' mean? This can be explained by using the example of the character John Dunbar in the book/film 'Dances with Wolves' (Blake, 1991). After being an American soldier, he then left those ranks and was initiated into a Native American tribe. When captured by his original unit, he neither spoke nor understood the American way. In the case of academic research that concerns us, if



engender the introduction (deliberately or otherwise) of loaded questions being introduced into interview or conversational situations. However, since 'third space' notions involve engagement with positionality issues, periodic self-reflexivity will serve to make the researcher aware of the potential pitfalls of this approach, and hopefully avoid them.

This approach also entailed practical problems simply because it involved being on a protest site. Living in a space of resistance is quite different from 'normal' student life (see *Voices from Earth First*, 1998), and issues had to be encountered such as individual accountability for action, and the willingness to be arrested. My diary noted my considerations on this theme at the time;

'jo' asked me at beltane if I was ready to be arrested or not... I have to sort out my personal options - is the meadow 'terminally ill'? if yes - should be here to hold 'her' hand, share, shoulder burden, if no, and she can be saved, then maybe being arrested might do some good...? Yet, if yes, should you do more than witness, should you stand up for your beliefs? It is a personal / ethical decision, and a pragmatic one - altogether you weigh up the risk of arrest, the point you can make and the success etc and the empowerment involved. I'll have to just do what feels right at the time. I shouldn't get arrested solely for work though (Appendix I:16).

Ultimately I didn't think it was worthwhile getting arrested at Ashton Court, and I succeeded in evading it on all occasions (but often this was by luck rather than judgement). The practical problems entailed in the blurred distinction between 'personal' and 'professional' life also meant that for many months I had to 'live' the PhD. As a consequence, I could not escape it even if I wanted to.

I feel scared about the heavy-handed police tactics at the Reclaim the Streets party this morning. The guy a yard away from me was felled by half-a-dozen coppers and his bike was smashed - it was completely arbitrary: it could have been any of us. I feel abit violated that I can/do use this personal emotion for a phd, that this phd is my life and vice versa. It is too all pervasive... (Appendix I:30).

Living in this third space thus entailed risking physical injury, and on a number of occasions I was attacked by security guards. The physical effect of living in a stressful environment and eating a bad diet for months on end also resulted in me getting very ill and losing a tenth of my body weight. The commitment necessary for operating from the third space should not therefore be underestimated.

#### Methodological practice and the physical spaces of EDA: Field Diary.

In order to keep a record of my research experiences a field diary was compiled from my first

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the researcher returns to their initial location as an academic (i.e. through writing up the PhD), rather than rejecting academia, it is difficult to maintain a 'gone native' critique of their work.



day at site onwards (a full record of this diary has been transcribed and can be found in Appendix I). No specific time was allocated for writing the diary, thus entries were made when necessary, sometimes taking merely a few seconds, or up to a number of hours. In this way, it was possible to note down on scraps of paper interesting comments, incidences, and feelings as they occurred or moments afterwards, but also longer, more reflexive pieces could be compiled. The diary thus came to oddly represent the day-to-day atmosphere as it was on site (in the same way as Leopold's 'Round River' diary, it came to literally and metaphorically 'smell of woodsmoke'<sup>14</sup>). Cumulatively, over the months of direct involvement, small but insightful pieces of experience were compiled that more structured interviews, for example, perhaps would not have ascertained - it appeared to me that people said their most astute political commentaries as throwaway comments in conversations etc, and it was these that proved to give some depth to my research information. The field diary, following Cook & Crang (1995:29), was therefore,

'some kind of record to how the research progressed, day by day, and a chart [of] how the researcher came to certain (mis)understandings. It represented the doubts, fears, concerns, feelings, and so on that the researcher has at all stages of her/his [i.e. my] work. It detailed how [my] understandings were affected by particular perspectives; [my] developing positionality in the community; power relations which can be discerned in this, how [my] expectations and motives were played out as the research progresses; what [I] divulged, and why and to whom and how they appeared to react to this; how various aspects of the research encounter made [me] 'feel' (e.g. swings) and how this affected what [I] did; what [I] dreamt about; what rumours came back to [me] about [my]self and the reasons for [my] presence in the community...'.

This methodological tool facilitated the blurring of the distinctions between me as an 'academic' and 'activist'. Due to the absence of formal interview situations, and thus the strict binaries of researcher and researched, after merely a number of days on site I found it hard to see where the boundaries of my positionality began and ended. It was clear to me that other activists had similar feelings: at one point, after a long and arduous campaign meeting, some activists asked me if I did any work for my PhD, and in my hearts of hearts I thought, do you think I'd be doing all this for my health!

My diary noted many of the positionality dilemmas I encountered during my research, as well as documenting how this positionality developed over time. A number of illustrative examples are cited below;

everyone (especially for example 'jim' who is quite quiet / shy) talks to you more if you're ON site, ie not visiting. as you're on site all the time, you feel more part of it, increasingly integrated. Its quite subtle, but you can sense it... (Appendix I:12)

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<sup>14</sup> 'Most of the journal notes included...were written around a campfire. They have, I think, some of the pungency of oak smoke; the original pages are here and there spattered with a slapped mosquito or a drop of camp coffee. They convey some measure of insight into the camp and field experience from which perception gradually emerged' (Leopold, 1953:6).



why does every other phd student I talk to (or is just everyone) ask if the people at site accept me as a 'student'? ie me studying them? it seems to me a really bizarre question now... (Appendix I:25)

when dan said in a conversation that he was a student etc etc. i felt uneasy that me and my 'two hats' were going to become the centre of conversation. and to be honest i wanted to avoid that if possible. lots of weekend visitors were onsite at the time and i didnt want to go through all the rigmarole of defending my position etc etc in place where I had felt at home for ages... (Appendix I:30)

**As noted in Figure 3:3, the participant comprehension approach was not used in isolation. The use of other methods, including virtual questionnaires, interviews and extensive documentary searches, were used to contextualise experiences gained through participant comprehension. Such multi-method adoption, allied to the dynamic oscillation between on-site and off-site situations served to ensure that the goals of rigour were kept in sight.**

#### **Methodological practice and the spaces of the mainstream media.**

**Allied to the theoretical perspectives on the spaces of the mainstream media as outlined in the previous chapter, a comprehensive analysis of the mass media reportage of EDA was undertaken. This was focused specifically on the newsprint and television reportage of the campaign at Ashton Court (both locally, regionally, and nationally), and broadened out to include the wider context of EDA in Britain where appropriate. To this end local newspapers (*The Evening Post* and the *Western Daily News*) were purchased regularly, and when on-site friends in Bristol obtained and kept copies of relevant articles. Past articles on the campaign in both local and national newsprint were obtained through a relatively comprehensive archive maintained by Bristol Friends of the Earth on their website (see Appendix IV). Campaigners at FoE also continued to archive media reportage throughout the period of EDA so any shortfalls in data coverage could be rectified through this avenue. Analysis of this newspaper coverage enabled the reflection on how the media reported different aspects of the EDA campaign (for example on-site activities, or uses of the Internet) as well as the different actions involved (for example, Reclaim the Streets parties, or 'pixieing' at Ashton Court). How, for example, some aspects of the protest were supported whilst others criticised, and how these framings evolved over time in line with public reactions to the broader climate of direct action, could be ascertained.**

**The framings used by the media in these instances could be compared to my own first-hand experiences of the protest on-site, as well as on-site reactions to specific media coverage and the mainstream media in general. Although Chapter Four examines these issues in detail, useful examples can be noted here. Many of the activists at Ashton Court were also centrally involved in Reclaim the Streets actions in Bristol (although the media singularly failed to make this connection). As a result it was often curious to notice that the same people participating in**



EDA in Bristol were condemned by the local media, but generally supported when located at Ashton Court (full examples are cited in Chapter Four). It appeared that the media, and the public, would give tacit support to environmental causes when these were seen to be 'rural' in nature (and thus not *directly* affecting their everyday life), but when these campaigns were broadened into 'urban' arenas (and caused traffic delays, for example) the activists involved became reviled and were seen as an unwanted threat to city life. In respect to one particular urban action, *The Evening Post* had supported the police in their attempts to 'Stop the Mob!' (see Figure 3:4). This headline became infamous in conversations on site, as my diary noted;

'I brought up those newspapers articles about RTS, they prompted a lot of wry jokes about the biased nature of reporting, the gist of which was that the police could not 'stop the mob' even if they tried, the 'mob' would (and did) go where it wanted' (Appendix I:5)

One of the activists involved was also known for their skill at subvertising (i.e. the use of graffiti to change the meaning of corporate advertising, often on billboards) - It was perhaps no coincidence that following the RTS action a piece of graffiti appeared near the Evening Post offices which stated: 'The mob took the street!'.



Figure 3:4. The Police promise to 'Stop the Mob' at the Imminent RTS party, as reported by the Evening Post (April 9<sup>th</sup>, 1998, p1).



Activists on site grew accustomed to the inaccurate reporting of EDA. A number of activists commented on how often they were misquoted by local journalists, or even had words attributed to them that they had never said. One activist told me that she didn't mind this so much as the journalists 'made me sound intelligent'. As a response to this, one activist suggested, as my diary noted, that,

'there should be a Bristol newspaper like Brighton's Evening Anus (i.e. a jibe at the 'Argus') to take the piss and do real reporting - unlike the Evening Post. He reckons that it should be called the Evening Pants! (a word that is integral to the vocabulary on site)' (Appendix I:13)

Indeed, as Chapter Four illustrates, a publication was produced to give a platform for activists' views (it ended up being called 'Bristle' - both a 'corruption' of 'Bristol', but also meaning 'to show anger and desire to resist' (Bristle, 1999)). Despite the inaccuracy of much reporting, good relations were forged between local journalists and activists. Much mobile telephone communication was had between the parties throughout the course of the campaign. I encountered a number of occasions where journalists turned up on site in order to compile stories for the local papers. These experiences were often informal and brief, for example,

'The Western Daily Press turn up (announced), they want to know where Jo is (its her mobile), they want to do a follow up to the Sunday Independent story. She isn't here so we give them a cup of tea and have a chat. they ask a few questions, get a role call, want to know how long we've been here, will be here, normal stuff. They want to know how we get on with security, the actions that have been done - she doesn't write anything down, its very easy going stuff. bee is great with them. does the food at the same time, which looks top, and they get good photos of her with 'craggy island - ah go on! have some tea!' sign. They're friendly, but dont ask us much about the issues at all. They want us to call them if things crack off at all' (Appendix I:16)

Such encounters often resulted in photo-led stories with a small byline stating the history of the campaign (this incident above, for example, resulted in the story depicted in Figure 3.5). Although such stories did not openly support the campaign, they often did not criticise it either and provided useful publicity for activists (see Chapter Four). As in the above example, when journalists came to site they often concentrated on one individual, often female. Later in the campaign when television companies got more involved in reportage (due to the unveiling of a tunnel, and the heightened tension due to threatened eviction, see Chapter Four) it was often the case that they gravitated towards female activists for 'vox-pops'. This situation suited both parties as the girls were often quite comfortable in such situations, and the journalists got their mediagenic 'human interest' story-line (see Chapter Four).



BADGERS AND WILDFLOWERS WIN REPRIEVE AS FIRST GREEN PROTESTORS ARRIVE

# Eco-warriors settle in for a quarry fight

By Lisa Pritchard

THEY are united by a single purpose — to prevent a rare wildflower meadow being destroyed by a quarry — and they are digging in for a long campaign.

Benders and tents have been springing up at the West's latest environmentalist protest since the beginning of March.

Now up to 20 eco-warriors are settling in for months of protesting at Durnford Quarry on the edge of the Ashton Court estate, near Bristol.

They are supported by nearby residents — who also oppose the plans by quarry company Pioneer Aggregates to extend its workings by 21 acres — in a variety of ways from charging the camp mobile phone to donations of food.

And they have already won a temporary reprieve for the meadow — the quarry cannot be extended until at least June because of a sett of protected badgers who are breeding.

By that time, the group hopes they will have been joined by dozens more campaigners to help with their planned actions.

Recently they held a picnic on the roof of the quarry offices and local schoolchildren have been invited to a children's activity day for games and workshops.

Campaigner Bee, aged 23, who is from Bristol and has taken part in other eco-protests nationwide, said: "We have had a lot of support from people who use these woods."

"They don't want to lose the meadow either and we will invite them into our camp for a cup of tea and talk to them about it."

Pioneer Aggregates wants to move the wildflower meadow to another site nearby.

IN BRISTOL travellers have set up a new camp on council-owned land.

Twelve caravans moved on to the site in Hengrove Park, just before Easter. They are believed to have come from South Gloucestershire.

The camp is on the site of the former Whitchurch Airport, now a recreation area which has restaurants and the new Cineworld multiplex complex.

Cinema staff said they had received a number of complaints from customers over the Easter weekend.

## FAMILIES SUPPORT INVADERS ON FIELD OF BATTLE

Bristol city council is now taking steps to get the travellers moved.

Spokesman Barry Taylor said: "The council has to go through a procedure laid down by the Government."


"If we were private land owners we could go to court and seek an eviction order."

The council must assess the site and will have to consider a number of issues, including the impact the travellers have on residents and the educational needs of any children living in the caravans.

Mr Taylor said: "The council is then in the position to decide whether to go to court and seek an eviction order."

Hengrove councillor Judy Webb said she had also received complaints from residents about the travellers.

She said: "We have not had any problems with them but last time travellers were here they verbally abused the residents."



Scenes from the protestors' camp. Woodcutting and even a phone

Figure 3:5. The Western Daily Press article which followed their journalist visit to Craggy Island (April, 14<sup>th</sup>, 1998, p5)

On most occasions television coverage of Ashton Court was filmed and edited rather than being shown live. As a result I was able to video the relevant programmes and on a number of occasions activists from site came into Bristol to watch the tapes - even 'eco-warriors' enjoyed seeing themselves on TV! Freelance journalists also developed good relations with the site. A number of photo-journalists became frequently involved in the EDA community through participating in action, and recording activity for posterity. These individuals provided photos for activist publications, as well as images for the mass media when actions occurred on occasions when mainstream journalists were absent. The degree to which specific actions were planned in order to coincide with media deadlines, or incidents shaped and structured to conform to the traditional values of media culture will be examined in detail in Chapter Four.



Methodological practice and spaces of the alternative media: Virtual spaces and Do-It-Yourself media.

The significance of Environmental Direct Action suggested by the above approach was compared to the personal experiences of protest gained through the participatory element of the research process, as well as being contrasted to the way the protesters reported the campaign themselves. As the limits of the mainstream media have been acknowledged by activists it has increasingly been the case that campaigners have conducted their own reports of the protests undertaken. In other words, activists have attempted to create a new (media) space in order to articulate their own political identities and visions. Initially this media reportage has been through the use of regular newsletters, but increasingly it has been achieved through video reports and Internet updates. My research approach thus entailed the analysis of relevant actual and virtual media sites that are being used by protesters to disseminate information on the protest in question. This approach focused on a navigation of the websites based around the Ashton Court campaign specifically, but broadened out to create a larger 'atlas' of virtual EDA sites. Analysis was made of how these sites were framed and linked together in order to help gain some understanding of the networks of support created within the EDA movement. A virtual questionnaire was also posted (as explained at the beginning of this chapter) to many 'wired' activists in order to ascertain perceptions of the importance of the alternative media to EDA (amongst other issues). The main drawbacks of such an approach have been outlined above, but other points regarding (email) questionnaires and their (lack of) suitability were discovered through experimentation with this form of inquiry. For example, such questionnaires take considerable time to fill in, and as a result you are dependent on the good will of the recipient to give up this time and take the questions seriously when they probably have a number of other things to do;

Anyhow, I would love to help you out but, as you guessed, sitting here at the computer for an extra hour to fill out your survey isn't going to be too exciting for me.

(From respondent2@email.address Thu Feb 12 05:03:42 1998)

Good questionnaire. Sorry I haven't been very elaborate but it is the 6th questionnaire of this sort that I have filled in this month and although yours is particularly good I'm beginning to get bored of being studied.

(From respondent4@email.address Tue Feb 17 16:35:48 1998)

Questionnaires often bring up relatively personal issues and, especially in relation to EDA, these can sometimes put practitioners in dubious legal positions. Although in such cases confidentiality can be assured on the part of the researcher, the security of the medium itself cannot; as one respondent reminded me,

IMHO email is *\*not\** a secure means of transmitting information (unless it is PGP encrypted) - any information that is posted



to you may have been automatically scanned for various keywords while it is in transit before you receive it.

(From respondant5@email.address Sat Feb 7 12:38:34 1998)

Having noted these drawbacks, the use of the email questionnaire did elicit a number of useful responses (even those that criticised the approach generally filled in the majority of questions). Many activists acted as 'gatekeepers' and put me in contact with other helpful sources, whilst others willingly contributed their 'eco-vitae' for my research. As a consequence of this range of responses I found it useful at the time to think of each direct activist as generally fitting into one of the four activist caricatures portrayed in Abbey's direct action novel, 'The Monkey Wrench Gang' (1991). There were those like 'Doc': academically educated, articulate and willing to attempt the rationalisation of their political motives (to varying degrees of success), those like 'Seldom Seen Smith': witty, primarily motivated by the chance to have a good time, those like 'Bonnie Abbzug': out to discover her true vocation, and those like 'Hayduke': bull-headed, simple-minded, who expressed himself primarily through action. Although stylised, such caricatures - or amalgams of them - were useful since they served to remind me that there is no one 'authentic' direct activist, and no one 'true' depiction of EDA. The contours, boundaries and motivations of the subject are vague, often chaotic and amorphous, as the following activist comment implies;

...lets not forget that activists motivations for being on site are never completely "pure". I've met a lot of activists- mostly at Newbury which seemed to attract them- who thought of the protest scene like a career ladder, ie "I've been here+ there + done this +that + WHERE WERE YOU??!!" In another environment they'd be office yuppies  
Let's be realistic. We've all got our baggage, even if its just background psychology of hating father figures, wanting to be needed or whatever...

From: respondant6@email.address Wed, 27 May 1998 16:30:07

The positive and negative aspects of cyberspace were also experienced in other ways. When a camp eviction was threatened at Ashton Court many of the die-hard activists did not want to leave the site to post calls for national support through the Internet. Through enjoying Web access through my student status, and having emails of EDA groups to hand through my research, I was willing to go to the department and send the messages prepared on site. However, the very day after these messages were sent (of which more in Chapter Four), the local constabulary were at Ashton Court asking who this 'J.M.Anderson@...' was who was networking information about the mooted eviction! Since EDA bulletin boards etc are open to anyone, very little 'conspiracy' was necessary to access my email. However this possibility could not be discounted, and it was a little disconcerting to think that the police could be monitoring your personal email messages. A further fear I had in regard to this email was the threat of being arrested for incitement. Due to the powers of the Criminal Justice & Public Order Act (1994), the police have the power to arrest and detain individuals who are thought to incite criminal action (see Chapter Six). Such arrest would not have happened directly, but in the



Immediate time after the posting of the email, I was worried that if I had worded the email 'incorrectly', and subsequent illegal activity occurred, I could somehow be linked to it. I naturally checked the email I had sent (and was relieved to find it being non-committal about illegal activity), and the posted warning on FoE's web-site suddenly rang true with me;

WARNING!!! These web pages are being visited by N.Somerset Council and Pioneer Aggregates and were used as evidence against campaigners at the recent High Court hearings. Reading this material could therefore result in the forces of destruction bringing charges against you for conspiracy to stop the trashing of our treasured landscapes, to stop profiteering and exploitation and for trying to secure a sustainable future for our children. You have been warned!  
(<http://www.joolz.demon.co.uk>)

The monitoring of EDA web-sites by the authorities can, however, work to activists' advantage. The posting of false information on the site can add authenticity to ruses planned by those on site, as was the case of the eviction at Ashton Court;

'But of course you've got the problem that the police read our web-site, the quarry company read our web-site, so before the festival we put in there all our plans to take down the camp and they were 'going on yes yes they are doing it because it says so on their web-site', and we totally didn't!' (Activist Interview, see Appendix V).

Monitoring of cyberspace linkages was also achieved through signing on to Bristol Green Group's mailing list (which is in turn appendaged to the Green Student network). These mailing lists served to illustrate how information regarding the campaign was spread through and connected to other campaigns in cyberspace, for example:

PANTS TO PIONEER!!

ASHTON COURT: Protesters have been fighting the expansion of Durnford Quarry into Ashton Court, a public park just over the suspension bridge, for nearly four years. The wildflower meadow on Top Park field has now been mostly destroyed, and Pioneer aggregates can begin blasting the rock this weekend. A Final "Full Moon Frenzy" is taking place at the camp on the evening of Thursday 3rd December. Kebele are providing food, and a Sound System has been sorted; bring booze, instruments, etc. and a sleeping bag - there will be plenty of warm, dry sleeping space! If you want directions to the camp, ring Ashton Court Quarry Campaign on 9420129. If you have been involved with the campaign, please come along and make your voice heard one last time...

From greengroup@email.address Fri Jan 15 14:19:58 1999

Urgent Message:

Building @ Siston Common (Avon Ring Road) Bristol: Occupied & section six'ed - Apparently security are blocking exit & entrance - few people holding fort - need more bodies quickly - is anyone out there? - please network this one round for all you're worth.

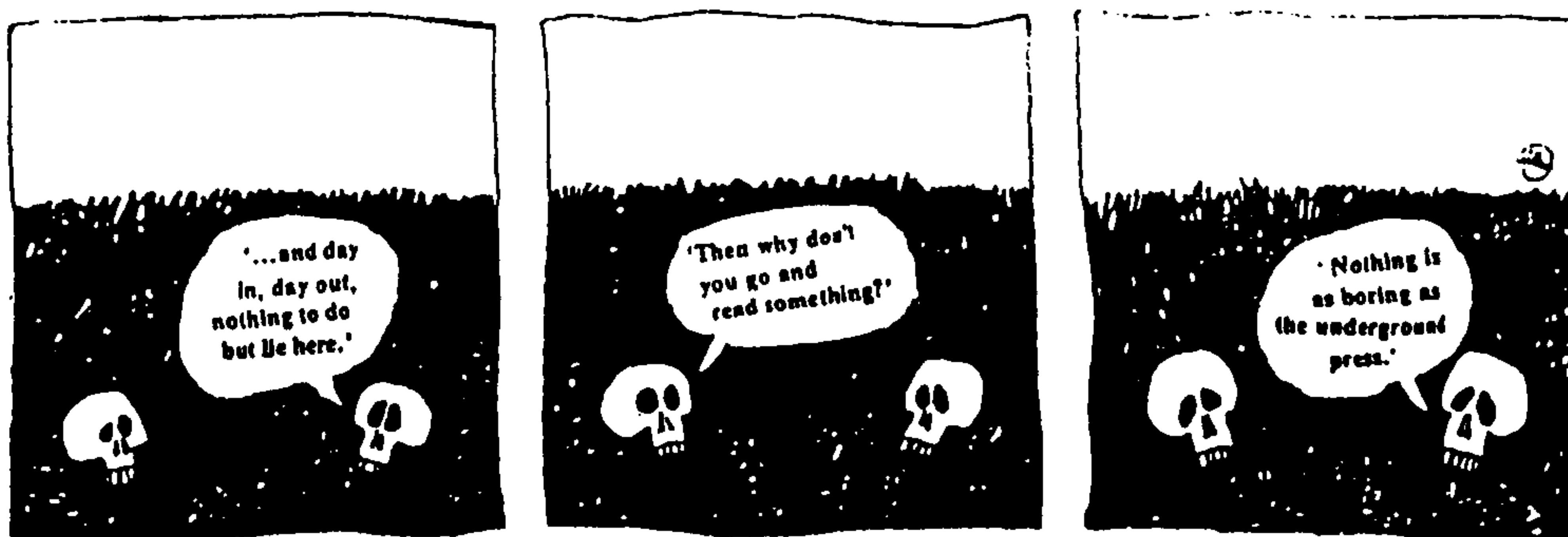
For Further Information, why not ring KEBELE @  
0117-939-3093 / 0117 939-9469 Camp Mobile = 0797 999 0389  
greengroup@email.address date: Fri, 15 Jan 1999



Allied to the 'virtual' media, numerous 'alternative' zines and newsletters were also regularly monitored. These included radical zines at the local level, namely 'Bristle', and the 'West Country Activist Newsletter', as well as more established publications, such as Friends of the Earth's 'InFoe' magazine. All these zines published regular reports on the activities at Ashton Court, and the style and framing of these reports not only highlighted the agendas of the alternative media, but also provided a useful comparison to that of the mainstream. Monitoring of local publications was supplemented by the analysis of national level alternative media, including 'SchNEWS', 'Do or Die', 'Earth First! Action Update' and 'Green Anarchist'. These publications reported on many EDA campaigns around the country, as well as direct action from abroad.

These zines were useful in understanding the various ways in which activists expressed their environmental concern. A number of alternative vocabularies were used, such as stories, poems and cartoons, instead of conventionally rational language. Chapter Five deals with this point in detail, but a number of illustrative examples follow;

'after a while / hour after hour / night and day / their endless barrage of noise / will take away / this silence forever / and this home to the wilderness / will become imprisoned in a cage / of intense noise'  
(*'Scott's'* poem, written on a campaign banner at Ashton Court, see Appendix I:14).



**Figure 3:7. Examples of the alternative vocabularies used by EDA-ers (from *Voices from Earth First!*, 1997:77, 1998:157 respectively).**



The way activists use these publications to recruit and empower individuals to action is perhaps the major purpose of these zines (as is described in detail in Chapter Four). For example:

**‘Even if we don’t write in a technically clever-clever way, it’s authentic, it’s real. It’s coming from people who won’t just tell you what it means, they tell you what it’s like. So this doesn’t just win people’s minds, it wins their hearts too. And only by winning hearts as well as minds do we get real commitment’ (Merrick, 1997:4).**

Such zines also serve an educational function since they inform activists about the existence of campaigns around the country, and often across the world. Some publications are explicitly educational as they inform activists ‘How to’ successfully engage with particular campaigning tactics (for example Road Alert!’s ‘Top Tips for Wrecking Roadbuilding’ (1997) from which a few excerpts are outlined in Figure 3:8);



Figure 3:8. 'Building For Tree Defence' (from <http://www.eco-action.org/rr/ch9.html#tree>)

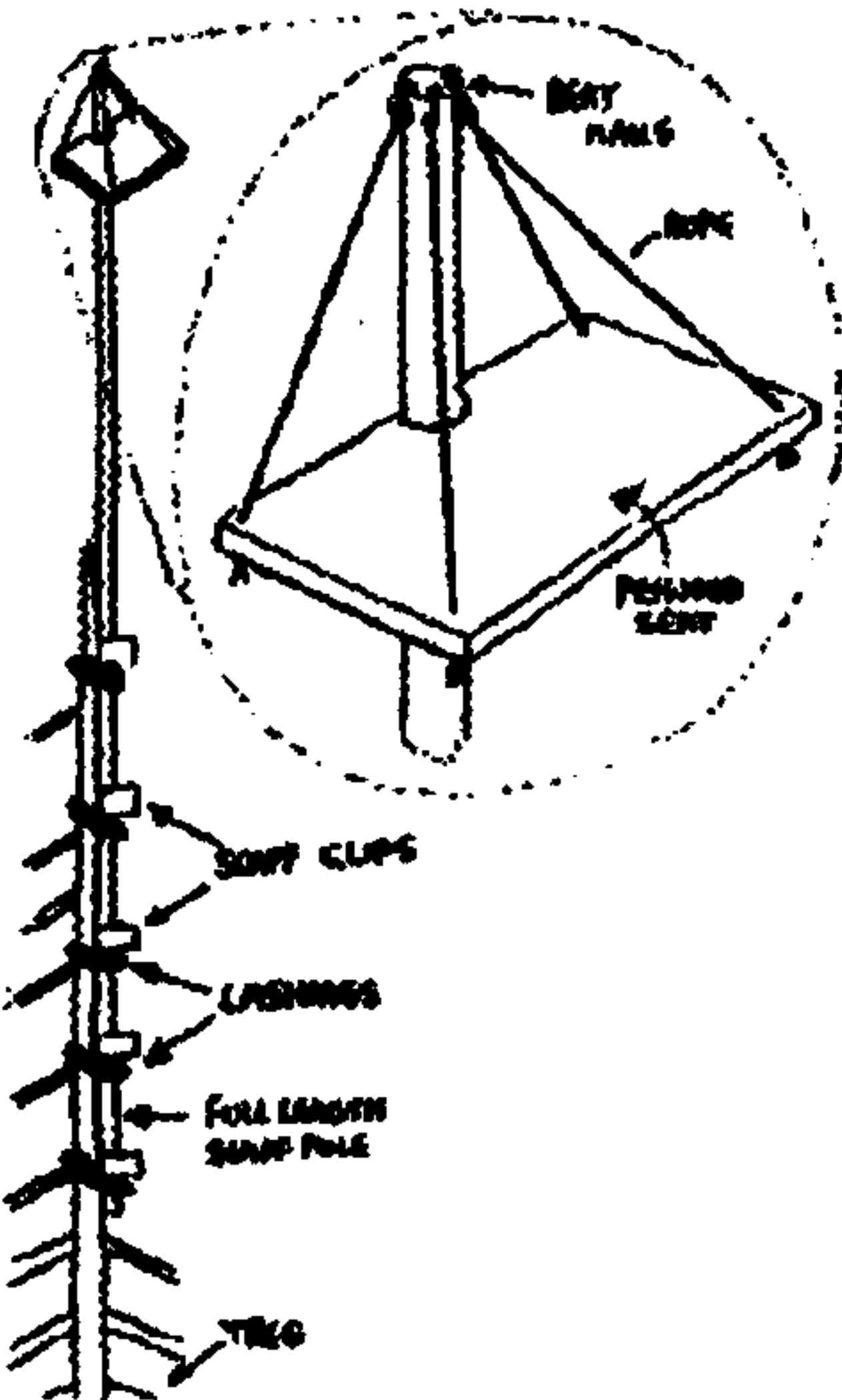
**Nets:**

Strong cargo nets can be strung between several trees to allow you to move around easily and sit in them during evictions, defending several trees at once. The best form of access is a walkway you can cut during an eviction. However, nets are a sitting target for cherry-pickers. Alternatively, climbers can lower the whole net down.

**Walkway Seats**

These should be very effective on cherry-picker proof sites. Start by building two walkways with two parallel top lines, the tree trunk's width apart.

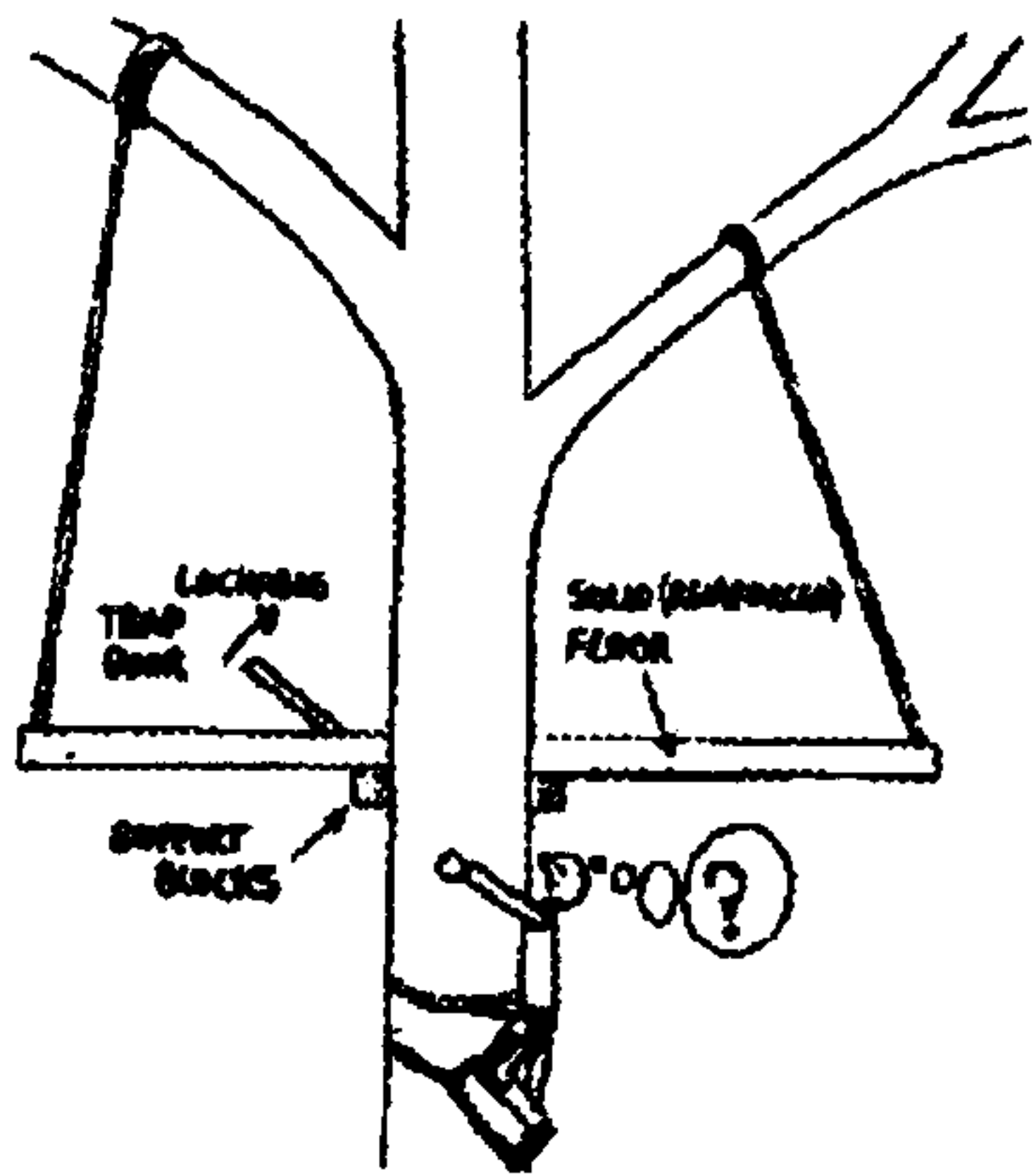
In the eviction you can balance a wooden seat across the top two lines and sit on it. If the climbers interfere with the top two lines, you will fall off.



**Ladders and Poles**

A ladder or a single pole can be placed to protrude above the tree canopy. This will cause problems for climbers and may even put you out of reach of cherry-pickers. This works best with straight-trunked trees such as conifers. Haul the pole or ladder up the tree and fix it to the highest part of the tree that you think will be safe. If using a single pole, attaching several scaffolding clips to its base will give you something to lash to. Use a plank and a rope to establish a seat at the top. Use at least four 6 inch nails, bent into an 'S' shape, as hooks to hang your seat from the end of the scaffold pole. You can lock onto a ladder.

**Eviction Access Points** When building, plan for where the security cordon is likely to be during the eviction and have several hidden access routes outside it. For instance, you could have two lengths of fishing line running between two trees, one tree within the camp, the other outside of where any cordon might be. Both fishing lines are attached, at their camp end, to a long length of polyprop, the other end of which is already tied to a tree within the camp. The two lengths of rope should be tied, some 1.5m (vertically) apart. The length of rope will be less obvious if stored coiled, perhaps in a plastic bag. During the eviction, activists can climb the tree outside the cordon and pull the (invisible) fishing line until they reach the lengths of polyprop. By tying these off and tensioning them to their tree, they can form walkways to get across into the camp.



**Climber-Proof Platforms**

These are designed with a platform surrounding the trunk of the tree. The only access is a lockable trap-door. The tree needs to be the tallest tree possible to prevent climber access from other nearby trees. If there are no branches immediately below the platform, climber access becomes even more difficult. However, these platforms are vulnerable to cherry-pickers. Scaffold poles sticking out from the platform would hinder cherry-picker access; grease them to prevent climbers using them.

Incorporate lock-ons into all defensive structures (see "lock-ons" in Ch 12). Well-placed lock-ons can block machine access and prevent tree felling. The physical obstacles you create need an aspect of novelty and humour to help to lighten the atmosphere.

The interaction between these zines and the activists at Ashton Court was monitored through research, noting how these broader communities of EDA were mobilised in times of trouble (see Chapter Four). It was also possible to obtain a general awareness of the representativeness of the campaign at Ashton Court when compared and contrasted to the reportage of other campaigns around the country. Analysis of activist publications also illustrated how campaigners developed more 'rational' and conventionally rigorous arguments over time, and how such theorisations of activism have come to play an increasingly significant part in EDA - although this is not necessarily acknowledged by activists. The following chapters engage with these points in some detail.



**Methodological practice: Conclusion.**

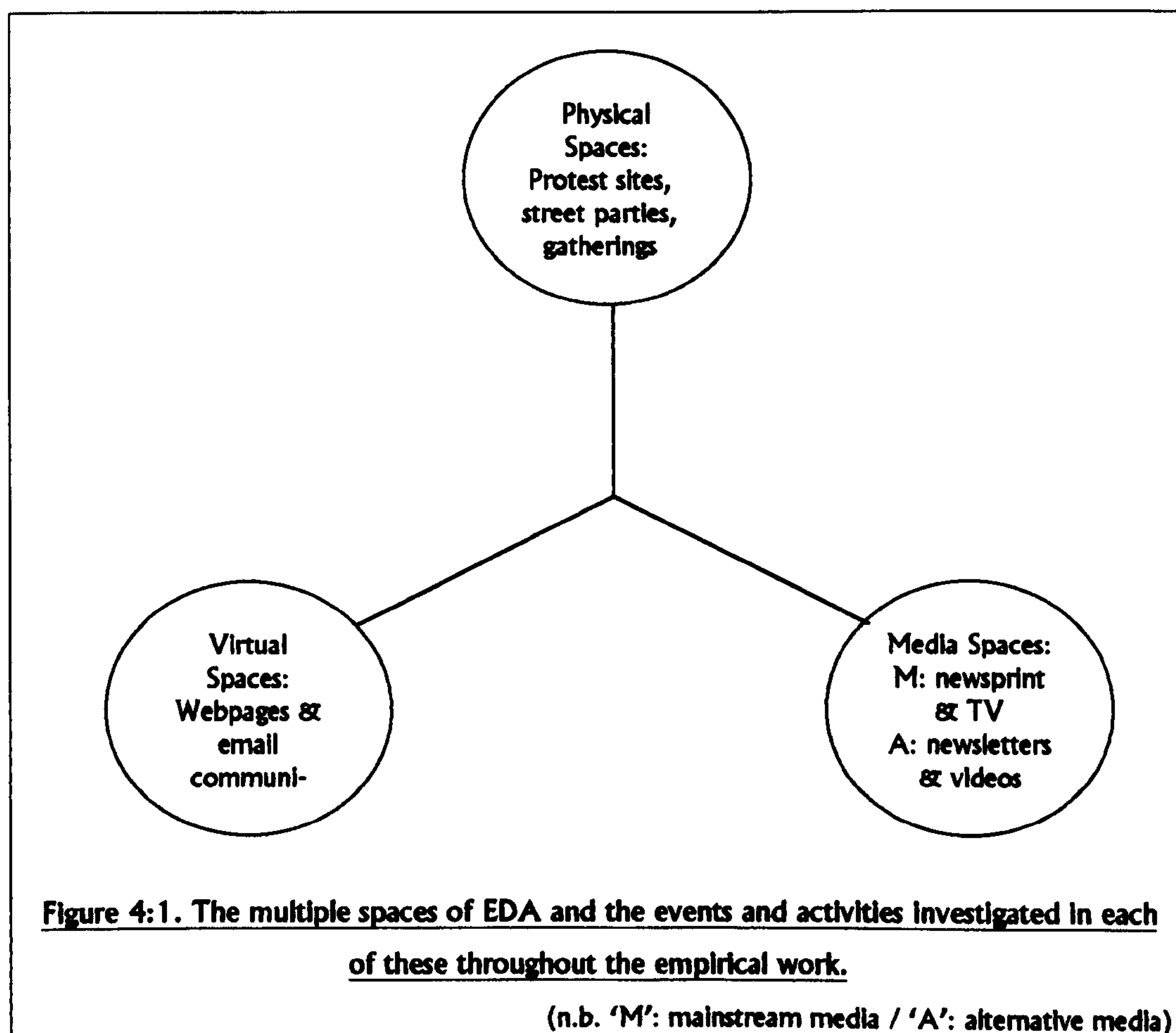
The methodological approach outlined in this chapter facilitated the transfer of objectives and theoretical potential of the third space into practice. This approach enabled EDA to be viewed from a number of positions, including first-hand experience on-site and the more distanced and critical location of academe. It enabled the integration of media representations of EDA into the research, thus allowing analysis of the accuracy of these popular representations, and the degree to which these commentaries influence, or are exploited by, EDA-ers in practice. Finally, this research approach enabled EDA to be viewed as a whole; the numerous sites and spaces of Environmental Direct Action could be integrated into the study and thus the networks and protest communities that are being established by activists could be analysed. The following three chapters outline the empirical findings elicited from this methodological approach. As a triumvirate they describe and examine the multiple spaces of EDA and the ways in which activists invoke the counter-hegemonic potential of space. Due to the methodological approach outlined, these chapters are able to appropriately explore the nature of the oppositional cultural values of EDA, and the structure and form that these take in practice.



Chapter Four: The multiple spaces of EDA.

**'We are not going to demand anything. We are not going to ask for anything. We are going to take. We are going to occupy' (Reclaim the Streets, 1996:1).**

In light of the various democratic deficits in liberal democracy (as outlined in Chapter Two), individuals have had to take and make political space themselves in order to gain a space for political representation. Environmental Direct Activists have taken, occupied, and made space in a variety of ways: physical space has been politicised through the creation of protest camps, whilst existing uses of space have been adapted through street parties and demonstrations. New media arenas have been created through the use of technologies such as camcorders and the Internet, and existing media spaces subverted through the exploitation of mainstream news culture. As a result there are many 'spaces of EDA'. Based on the figures used in previous chapters, Figure 4:1 (below) depicts these multiple spaces of EDA and the various events and activities in each that have been explored in the empirical work for this thesis.



In light of the debates outlined in Chapter One, this thesis argues that EDA-ers take and make space in order to invoke alternative structures of power. In the words of Fiddes (1999:44),

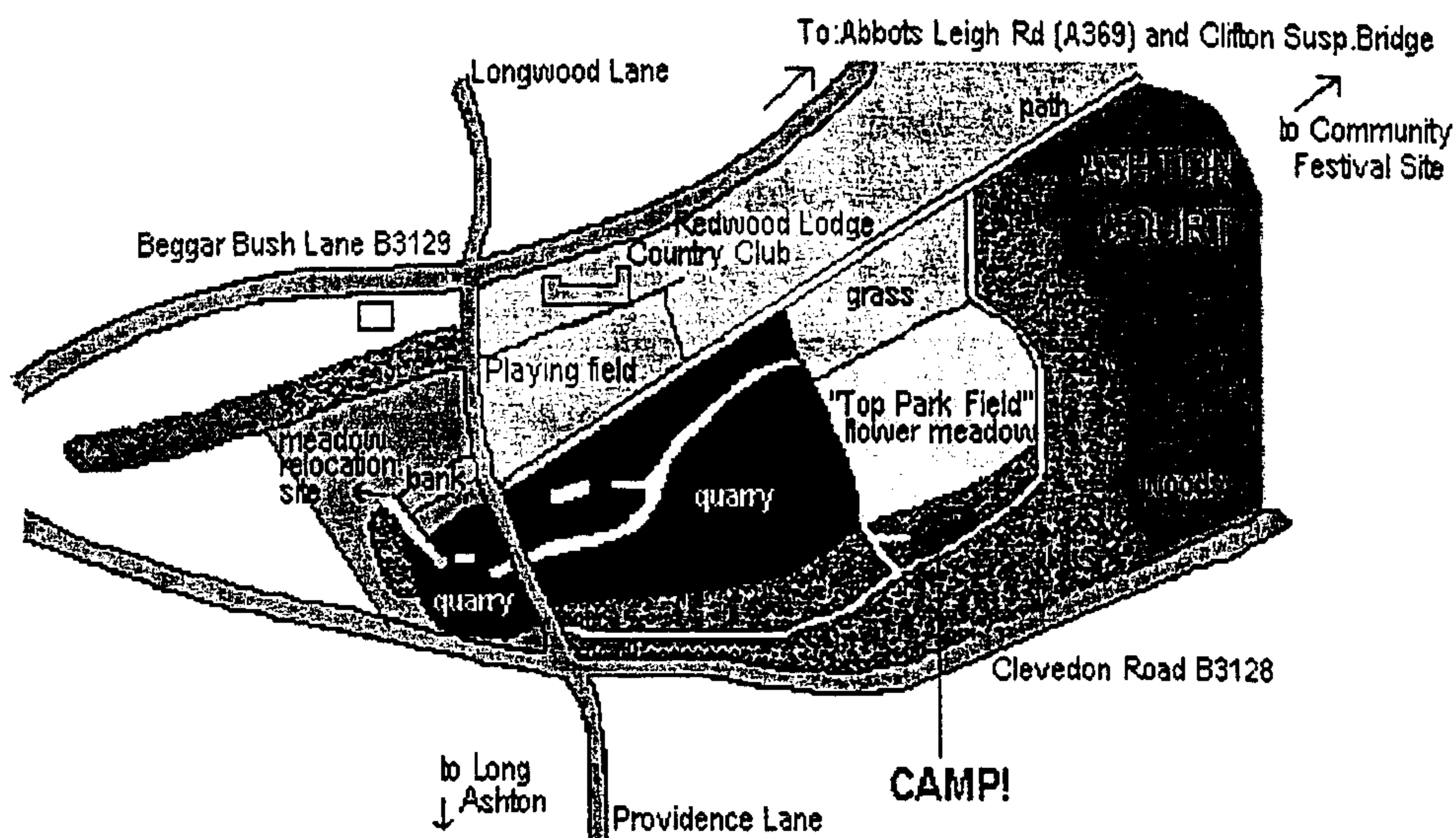


EDA-ers, 'shift the ground to marginalize the authorities' strengths, while shifting their own ground to centre stage'. Through taking space, activists are able to provide themselves a platform from which they can alter modern structures and modes of organisation and replace them with forms that complement their own preferred cultural values. In other words, through practising their own form of 'autopoietic' politics (Escobar, 1995), EDA-ers take space and then refashion it to create new spatialities of political action and community. Through focusing specifically on the multiple sites of EDA linked to Ashton Court, this chapter will examine each of the spaces of EDA and the ways in which their political status had been altered through activism. It will discuss, in other words, how a radical 'thirding' has taken place in these arenas. Through investigating these arenas using the 'third space' perspective, this chapter contributes not only to our awareness of the spatiality of EDA, but also to our understanding of its cultural preferences. It will argue that one of the distinguishing features of EDA's cultural values is a structure of power based on the autonomy of the individual. This chapter (along with those that follow) will demonstrate how activists view power not as something to be granted in a top down fashion, but taken by individuals. As 'Reclaim the Streets' state, 'the most important thing [about EDA] is that we won't be asking the politicians to create a future for us, we will create it for ourselves' (RTS, 1996). This chapter will also illustrate the second characteristic of EDA's cultural preferences; the creation of communities, or 'combinatorial networks' (after Soja, 1996) of radical spaces. From a third space perspective, the spaces of EDA are not fragmented or isolated in nature, rather they are networked using a variety of binding communicative devices, or 'vocabularies' (these are discussed in detail in Chapter Five). The current chapter describes the various ways in which the taking of place by activists physically (and virtually) embodies these cultural values of EDA. It outlines the ways in which the multiple spaces of EDA interact and link together, and traces how EDA's power ethic permeates and structures these combined spaces.

#### The physical spaces of EDA.

During the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign, the struggle for autonomous physical space involved transforming the political status of Ashton Court Estate itself. Two action camps, 'Craggy Island' and 'The New State of Bulgaria', were established that altered the existing uses of space in a variety of ways. The following map illustrates the position of the camps within Ashton Court Estate;





**Figure 4:2. An activist map of Ashton Court Estate illustrating the location of the EDA camps adjacent to the wild flower meadow and quarry (both camps developed in the space demarcated here) (<http://www.gn.apc.org.ashton-court/cycling>).**

Prior to the establishment of the EDA camps at Ashton Court, and following the discussion on public spaces in Chapter One, Ashton Court Estate was perhaps best described as a 'pseudo-public space'. It is an area that had been 'set aside', where,

'restrictions on behaviour and activities are taken for granted; prominent signs designate appropriate uses and outline rules concerning where one may walk, ride or gather' (Mitchell 1995:34).

As a controlled and regulated space, Ashton Court Estate was not intended to be a public space in the political sense; rather, it was one of Bristol's primary places of recreation, part of the city's 'green lungs'. Bristol City Council's rhetoric echoes their apparent pride in these areas<sup>1</sup>;

'Breathe a sigh of relief!... . You have arrived at the wonderful world of Bristol's Parks. The City of Bristol is home to over 450 diverse park sites from ancient commons to fine eighteenth century landscapes... . As you can imagine the City is just bursting with open space that you can relax and enjoy yourself in. Most people in Bristol both young and old already escape to the parks to experience a natural environment that is green, spacious and provides an opportunity to get in touch with nature..., so come and explore some of it with us!' (<http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk>)

Ashton Court became public land when it was sold to the people of Bristol in 1959. When permission was given for the expansion of nearby Durnford Quarry into the Estate, thereby destroying a wild flower meadow, many individuals perceived that this stood in direct

<sup>1</sup> As outlined in the previous chapter, different font styles are used in this thesis to represent different sources of information: Courier New represents an Internet source, Letter Gothic a field diary source, and media sources by an appropriate pagination.



opposition to their own interests. In attempting to politically resist this quarry expansion these individuals experienced first-hand the lack of space available within the liberal democratic system for such activity (as outlined in Appendix II, and noted in Chapter One). Throughout this prolonged campaign, the abstract nature of the deficits of liberal democracy were brought home to these individuals, there was no space within the conventional democratic framework to successfully articulate not only environmental issues, but also issues of local autonomy over land use. As a consequence, many of the campaigners who had not become apathetic or exhausted by the political campaigning through conventional channels joined with others to practice direct resistance at Ashton Court itself.

#### Welcome to 'Craggy Island' and 'Bulgaria'.

The radical 'thirding' of space in 'Pillwood' in March 1998 began with the strategic placement of a number of colourful boundary ribbons and the construction of a firepit and communal bender. These marked the creation of 'Craggy Island'<sup>2</sup>. Unlike most protest camps, which are sited directly on the land due for destruction, Craggy Island was placed on land adjacent to both the existing quarry and the wild flower meadow. It was decided that due to the fragile nature of the meadow habitat it would be nonsensical for a camp to be sited upon it, and thus risk the destruction of the space that was hoped to be saved.

The creation of Craggy Island altered the dominant uses and status of space in numerous ways. Craggy Island was initially set up with the onus on it being a 'publicity', rather than conventional 'protest', camp which would commonly have to be evicted before any destruction could begin (this was principally due to its off-meadow location). Over time however, the reasons for camp formation incorporated both issues, as a diary extract from one of my early visits to site summarises;

some of 'ray's' mates come by...they ask why the camp is 'off site' - isn't that abit silly? 'Ray' replies that its strategic. for publicity. for getting people up here. keeping observation... . They are also letting Pioneer know they are there. that they can't get away with it without a fight... . The activists will do nuisance stuff when they put up fences etc but this is all abit secret at the moment. They want to cost the company money and scare them... (Appendix I:3)

As noted, prior to the establishment of Craggy Island, Ashton Court was perhaps a 'pseudo public space'. However, its creation marked the transition to a 'real' political space. Craggy Island provided a platform for campaigners to articulate their political and personal viewpoints regarding the quarry issue, a platform that had not been enjoyed through the conventional

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<sup>2</sup>Craggy Island was named after the fictitious home of 'Father Ted'. The actor who played Ted, Dermot Morgan, died the same week as the camp was set up. A 'lock-on' at Craggy Island became known as 'Mrs Doyle' (the tea lady in the comedy series), and 'more tea?' [her catchphrase] was a question never far from everybody's lips.



political channels. Not only could economic and political arguments be voiced regarding, for example, the recycling of aggregates, but also feelings about the meadow could be articulated which the mainstream would not fully take into account. Chapter Five examines the multiple vocabularies of activists' environmental and political concern in some detail, but it is important here to note one example that symbolised the difference in valuations of the wild flower meadow between the authorities and the activists. None of the signs in Ashton Court erected by the Council correctly located the meadow on the site of Top Park Field. As Figure 4:3 illustrates, the Bristol City Council located the wildflower meadow far from Top Park Field (the area demarcated by the BCC is in fact an area of scrubland):

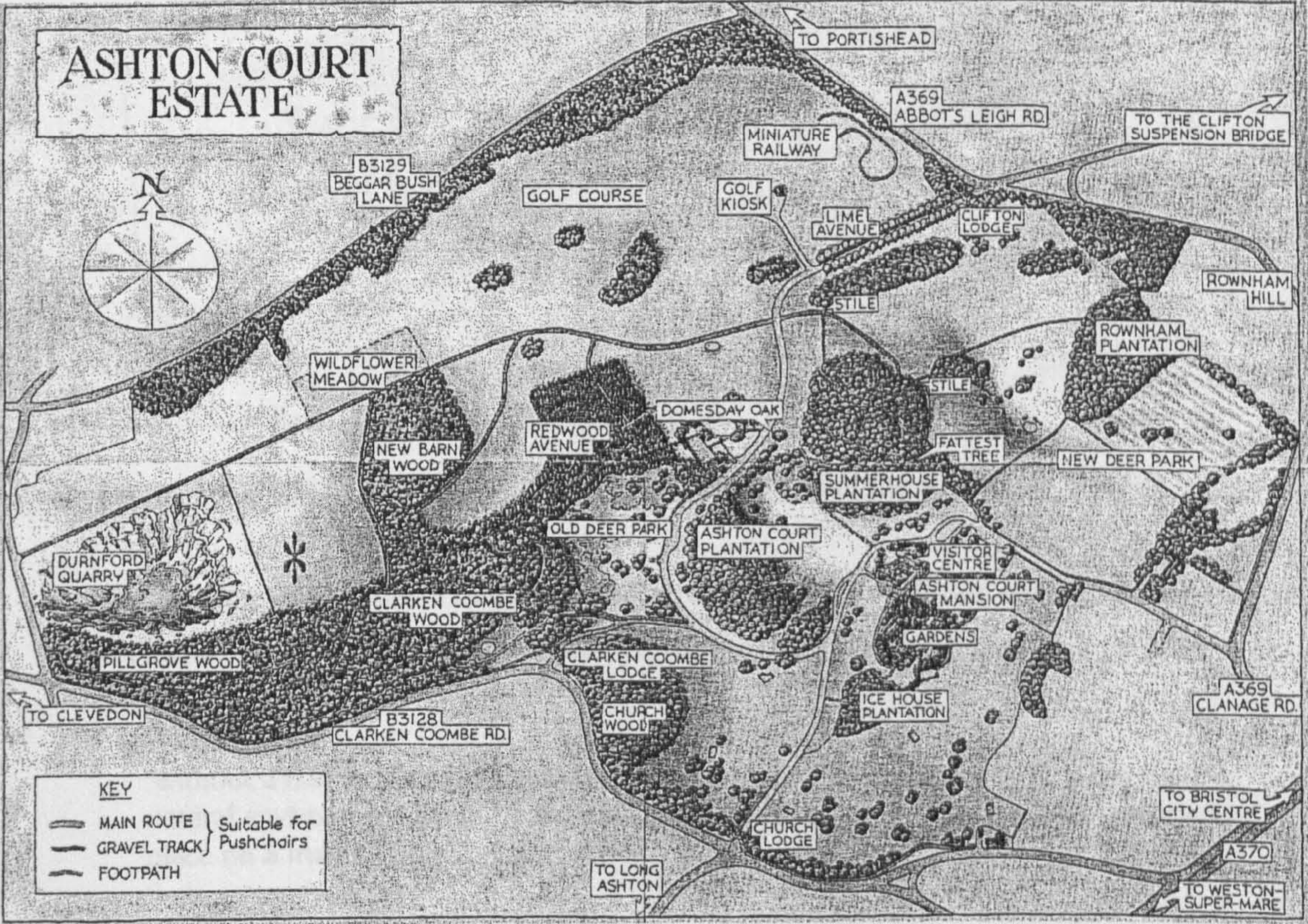


Figure 4:3 Top Park Field is marked by the \* on the map; the BCC's notated 'wildflower meadow' is to the north of this area.



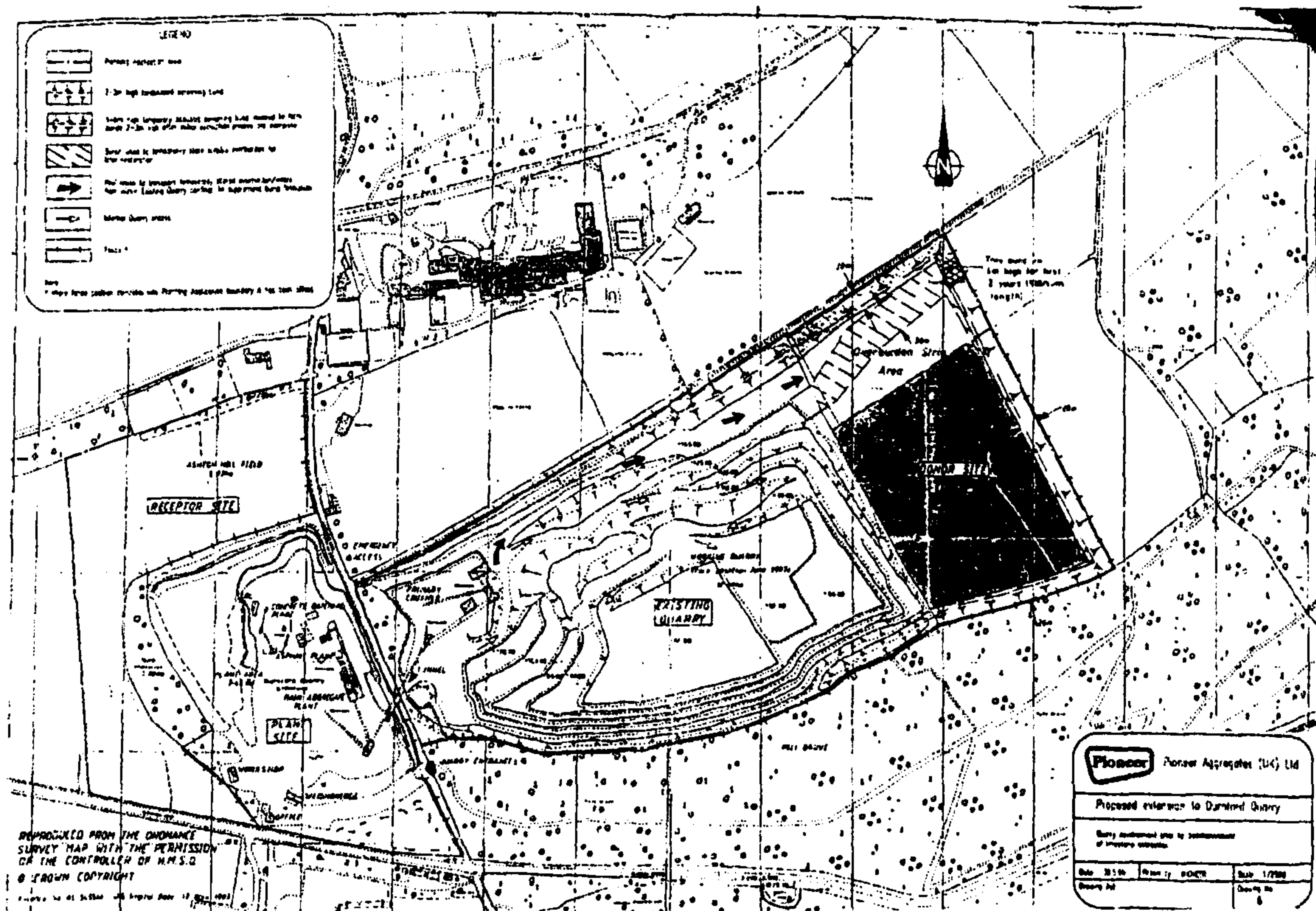


Figure 4:4. Pioneer Aggregates' map of Ashton Court and the wildflower meadow/donor site.

Whilst Figure 4:4 illustrates that Pioneer Aggregates accurately locate the wild flower meadow, but notate it as a 'donor site'. Accurate 'naming' of important sites is crucial; as Tilley (1994:18) suggests,

'without a name culturally significant sites would not exist, but only as a raw void, a natural environment. In a fundamental way names create landscapes. An unnamed place on a map is quite literally a blank space'.

This lack of cartographic recognition thus symbolised the Councils', and Pioneer Aggregates' view that Top Park Field was a 'blank space', suitable only for economic exploitation. In contrast to this cultural construction of environmental space, many locals and EDA-ers held Top Park Field as a space of intrinsic worth, as well as valuable in amenity and spiritual terms. As a result many called it 'home' for twelve months of their lives.

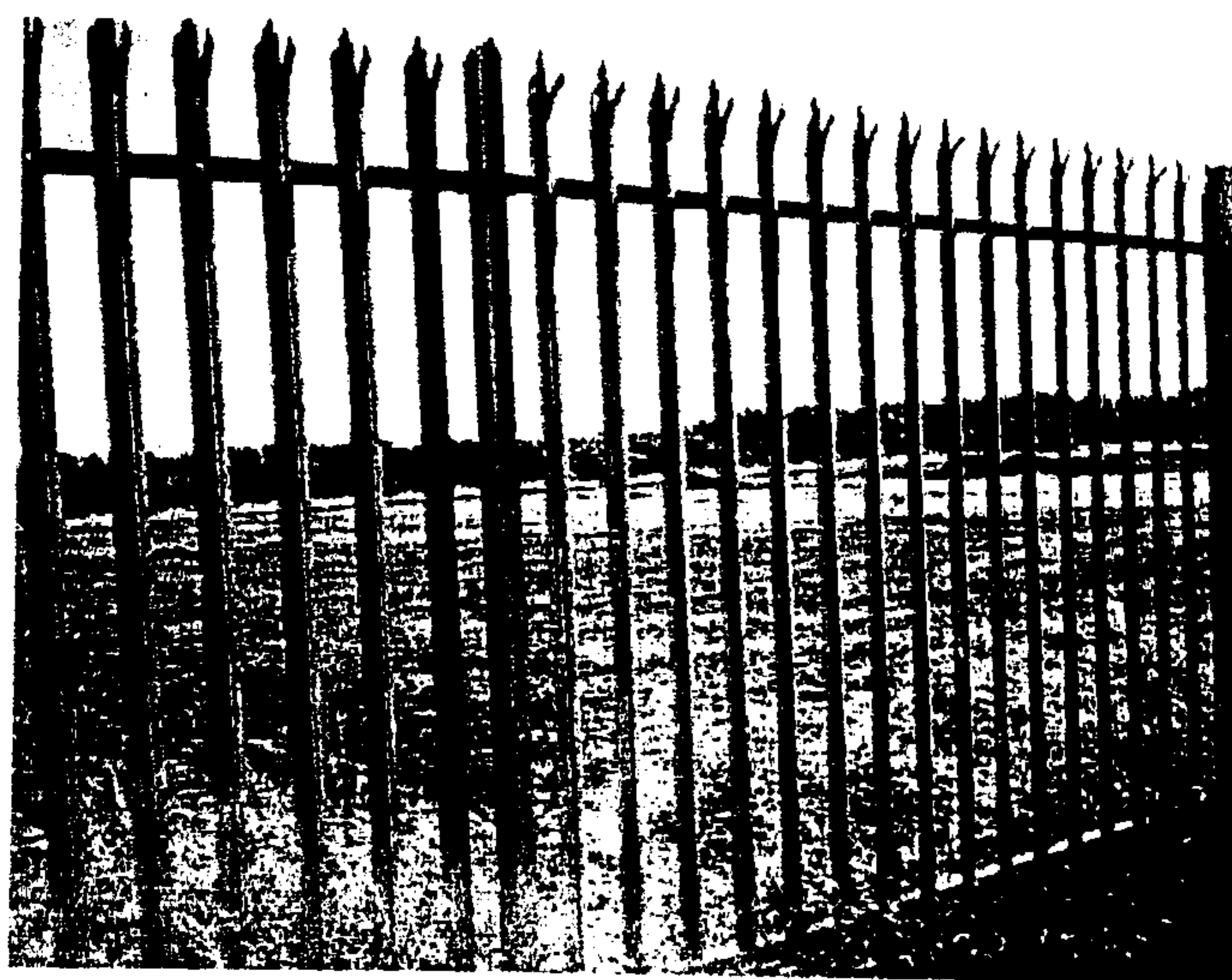
'I'm taking o'fence!' (DJ. at a party on Ashton Court meadow. (Appendix I:32)

The status of Craggy Island altered again when the threatened enclosure of the wild flower meadow became actual in June 1998. At this time, Pioneer hired a fencing firm to put up an eight-foot steel fence around the meadow. This event sparked both anger and action on behalf of activists as the tangible and symbolic significance of this enclosing fence was evident for all to see;



'We've called it caging the wild orchids. Just as they're coming into bloom now at the beginning of the summer they're [Pioneer] putting a huge steel fence up around them. There have been people on horses, on bikes, with dogs, just walking around the field enjoying it just as it comes to life' (Jo, interviewed by BBC News West, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1998).

An action was held in an attempt to stop the fence being started. This was the first time that the now politicised meadow was itself the actual site of struggle. As contractors, protected by security guards, began to dig holes for fence posts, activists (including myself) filled in those already excavated. This attempt to physically halt and simultaneously reclaim the meadow from the expanding edge of enclosure was stopped by the eventual arrival of the police. The police stated that the meadow and the gravel path adjacent to it were now private property, and that if we did not move on, we would all be charged under 'Section 69' of the Criminal Justice & Public Order Act, 1994<sup>3</sup>. This response to the activists' attempts to pursue a counter-hegemonic strategy succeeded in ending the formal protest as none of the campaigners wished to be bailed off site for three months<sup>4</sup>. (Chapter Six will examine the ways in which the counter-hegemonic strategies of activists have been countered by the authorities in more detail.)

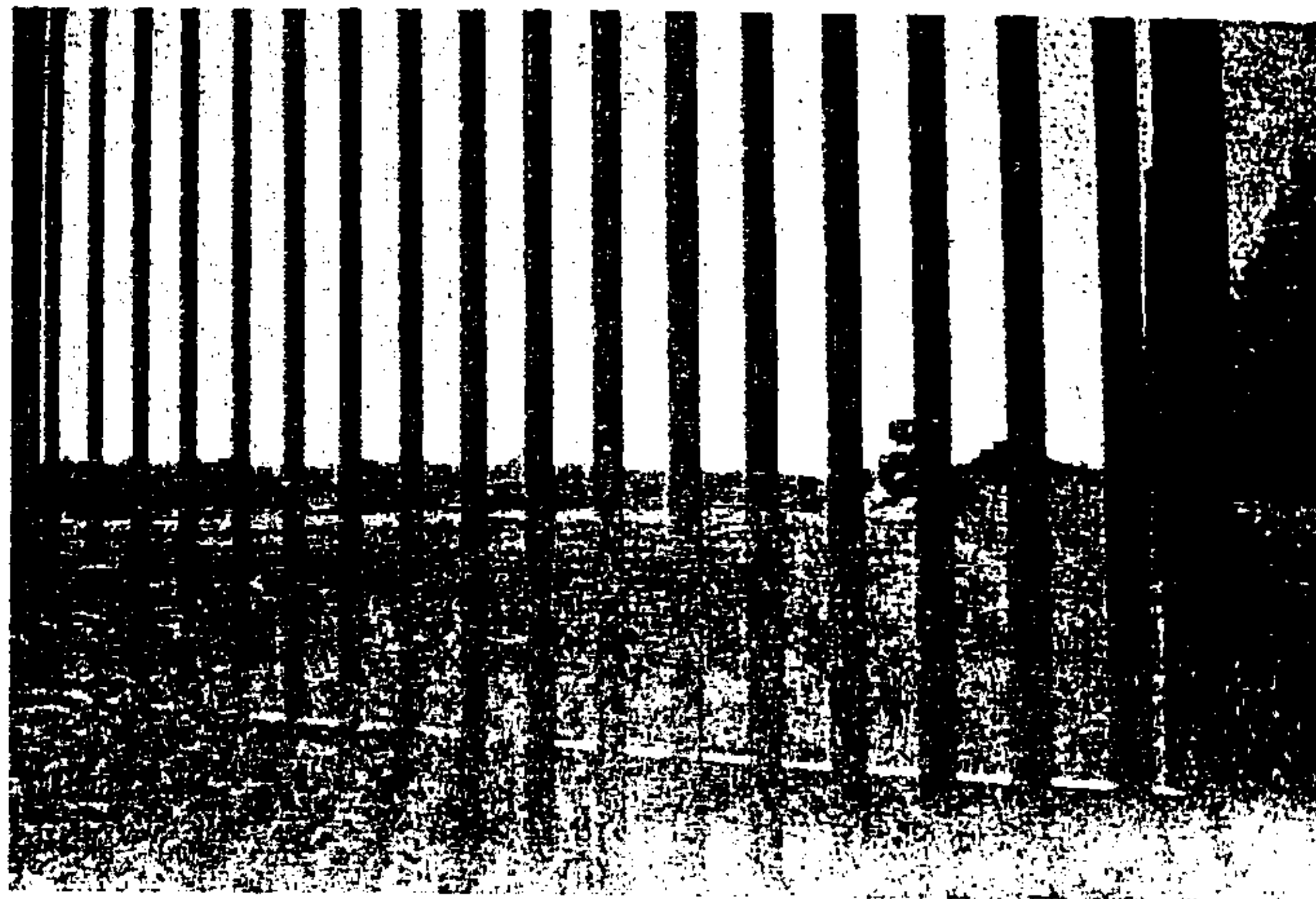


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<sup>3</sup>According to Road Alert! (1998:139) the CJA Section 69 is 'the offence you commit when you refuse to obey the instruction of a cop to leave land which they believe you will commit aggravated trespass on. They must give you a warning for this and you will have to have ignored it, or returned within three months. Maximum sentence 3 months and/or a Level 4 fine'.

<sup>4</sup>To be 'bailed off' site would mean that the individual would not be allowed to enter a stated exclusion zone around the protest site (this zone varied according to police discretion).





Figures 4:5 & 4:6 illustrate the nature of the steel fence erected around the wildflower meadow. The graffiti on 4:5 reads 'Parks not Profit', whilst on 4:6 it states 'You would quarry your granny'.

The 'caging' of the meadow did however spark numerous informal 'pixie' missions that ended in holes under and through the steel fence (thus the second reason for the camp's existence was made manifest). It also resulted in the construction of a second camp, right on the fence-edge, and this camp was named 'Bulgaria'<sup>5</sup>.

'Ashton Court Quarry Campaign: the protest camp in the woods below the meadow is expanding. A second camp, known as Bulgaria has also been set up to watch the meadow from' (Bristle, 1998:2).

As 'Bristle' explains, Bulgaria was formed in order to monitor the progress of the fence construction and possible later excavation. On Craggy Island it was thought that perhaps the campaign could not sustain two camps, and to split them would weaken resolve. However, this eventuality failed to emerge since the two camps adopted different roles in the campaign. Craggy Island maintained its original role as visitor camp and publicity site, allied to a space for activists to relax. Bulgaria became the site on the frontline: it was here that 'pixie' missions were planned by long-standing activists, and the excavation of 'Dino' - the tunnel under the meadow, was begun.

This conscious role adoption benefited both sites as, by this time, the 'public space' function of Craggy Island had become relatively successful. As noted above, Craggy Island had become a space in which alternative meanings and representations of the multitude of issues surrounding the proposed quarry expansion could be voiced and practiced. As a consequence, Craggy Island had also become a space for recruitment; through their taking of space activists had created an arena to which like-minded individuals could be attracted, as well as a zone in which interested

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<sup>5</sup>'Bulgaria' was named after one of the famous 'Wombles' characters who are renowned for their green living and sustainable habitation of a public park.



parties could be convinced by the activists' message. This was achieved not only through recruiting existing users of Ashton Court, but also through publicity in other EDA spaces, for example, the Internet and the media (as illustrated later in this chapter). In this recruiting role, Craggy Island was relatively successful; as the following examples from my field diary illustrate,

Me and 'bee' were doing a water run to the tap in Ashton Court when we came across some locals. 'bee' is dead good talking to the locals who pass by. You get them talking by just being open and forthright. You get them to agree with the camp etc., tell their friends, even write to their MP etc. They agree to (Appendix I:3)

two old gits (!) came by when we [me, 'gav' & 'nad'] were up in the trees. Its good to talk to people. We exchange names. Makes a difference just *talking* to people - face to face, get personal. People shy away from that but using eye contact etc you make connections. People end up saying 'good luck' when before they'd much more likely go 'f\*\$k off!' (Appendix I:6)

Activists were attracted to Ashton Court from local festivals (including Glastonbury, the West Country Activist gathering and the Green gathering), as well as other protest camps around the country. Activists stayed at the site who had come from Brighton, Kingston, Lyminge Forest, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Radstock, Dead Woman's Bottom, Birmingham, Lyon, Dublin and Totnes. This attraction of activists led to a through-flow, or migration, of individuals from site to site. Due to the increase in environmental threats, and the growth of action camps around the country, many activists have adopted a nomadic or travelling lifestyle (at least during some of the year) in order to support these various action camps. At Ashton Court, it was clear that the migratory nature of EDA-ers enabled a flow of oral information to exist between EDA spaces.

'Though we had never met before, we were acquainted with him and he with us, by means of that far reaching and mysterious, but highly efficient moccasin telegraph system, peculiar to primitive peoples, whereby a man's character and history are known with uncanny accuracy over whole territories where he had never appeared' (Grey Owl 1973:53).

The movement of EDA-ers between the various physical spaces of action inevitably involves the transference of information, knowledge and gossip from site to site. In much the same way as Grey Owl notes above, through research in the third space I realised that, as activists moved from site to site, an oral telegraph system between EDA spaces was being informally established. Despite advances such as Internet and media communication, when EDA-ers are on site they generally do not have access to cyberspace, phones or faxes. The most important method of communication is thus through meeting and talking to others that are involved. Although organised on a purely informal basis, this transference of information appears to constitute the primary method through which activists become informed about important



events in the lives of other activists, the existence and development of campaigns, as well as finding out information regarding new actions or police tactics. Ashton Court can be seen to have benefited directly from such connections. A number of long term residents arrived at Craggy Island due to hearing about the onset of the camp 'on the grapevine'. Activists also went on recruiting missions between sites in the south of England in order to publicise the site's existence and its wish for new activists (which was relatively successful, bringing in activists from Birmingham, Brighton, London and Kent). These links also were useful in bringing short term residents to Craggy Island and Bulgaria who often served to instil new vigour and energy into the campaign, transferring innovatory tactics or merely enthusiasm to the situation. These networks also brought information regarding the development of other national sites (especially Radstock, Crystal Palace, Birmingham and Lyminge, from which a regular return migration of activists occurred). A number of diary excerpts follow to illustrate the above points;

'Earlier on this afternoon 'Rapunzel' turned up from Lyminge - I had never met him before but everyone knows him, and he knows everyone else by name. Everyone on site is SO GLAD to see him! He tells stories about their mutual friends all throughout dinner as we sit around the firepit, and until we are all too knackered to stay awake. There is talk of Manchester, Kingston Poplars, Lyminge Forest, and they talk about of a memorial service in Birmingham next week for a guy who died [of natural causes] whilst on the BNRR campaign' (Appendix I:7)

'Lea' and 'Phil' turn up - they are travelling, but are friends with 'Ken' from Cotham. They have just come up from Chichester, but in March they were at Lyminge - they say its clear that at some point that campaign was really well organised, but when they were there there were fewer people and more 'brew crew' - people weren't showing that much respect for the place - dumping stuff etc. The feeling is that 'Rank' [the developer] will probably forget about the development now - especially since the sister venture up north lost £1million last year...' (Appendix I:12)

'Billie was telling us earlier about the RTS actions in France - it was one of the first actions there and the police were really hardcore, and the french were too nervous / apathetic to push the situation too far...' (Appendix I:14)

'3 leather clad guys arrived on site today from London, they knew Billie, Fee and Baz from there. They said Craggy was a pretty nice site (like everyone else has!). They said that Lyminge Forest has got a lot better' (Appendix I:23)

**This creation of a 'telegraph' system - a maze of oral trackways that are established as activists migrate from site to site - has the effect of weaving together the many spaces of EDA. As a consequence of this 'weaving' effect, participation at one site engenders the feeling that you are involved in something broader, that you are becoming constitutive of a wider community. This I experienced first hand through living in the third space;**



seeing 'rapunzel' - who is part of it all, makes it seem as if Ashton Court is part of it all, and I'm becoming part of it all. nice one. Good for me, good for work.

before I started ashton court my 'efficacious range' was me: personal is political. I suppose a bit of a cop out // some quote from pepper. I cant change big things so what the point in getting all angry etc.

Now at a/c I feel my eff. range is bigger, im doing something, im part of something wider and im not angry - its good fun, and feeling like im doing something. And we ARE doing something. We exist, we cost £, we change passers by attitudes, we make people think. We make the next one harder. We are standing up for what we believe in, we're standing up for our common ground our park, our land (Appendix I:4)

**The establishment of oral trackways and the weaving effect they have on the many spaces of EDA thus transfers a broader geographical dimension to the community and culture of EDA. Such lines of migration become a dominant line of communication between those on various sites, thus contributing significantly to the, 'epics, songs, genealogies and legends of the tribe; provid[ing] the secret caravan routes and raiding trails which make up the flowlines of tribal economy' (Barbrook, [www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/](http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/)). This aspect of EDA is examined further in Chapters Five & Six.**

**The case of Ashton Court therefore illustrates that the taking of physical space by EDA-ers invokes a radical 'thirthing' in these arenas. Over the course of a campaign the political status of space is altered and adapted as hegemonic and counter-hegemonic power relations oscillate and struggle for supremacy. The conflicting cultural constructions of 'environment' are embodied through these (often literally) physical struggles. Through the establishment of such spaces, EDA sites function as an arena for recruitment. Although publicity for recruitment is achieved through many communicative media, it can be seen that the use of oral communication is intrinsically important to these spaces. The ways in which activists move from site to site effectively creates 'oral trackways' between geographically disparate physical spaces of EDA. As a consequence, these physical spaces are binded together into a larger combinatorial network, or community of EDA.**

**The taking of physical space by EDA-ers can also be seen to be a platform from which activists can invoke their chosen ethic of power. EDA-ers view power as something to be taken, to be activated. This ethic is practised by EDA-ers through taking physical space as an embodiment of individuals' commitment to prevent environmental destruction. Sited upon, or in close proximity to a threatened environment, protest camps are physical obstacles that are established in order to resist eco-damage. Beyond this function, the physical spaces of EDA also embody 'people power' through redressing the democratic deficits apparent in the spaces of liberal democracy - these spaces facilitate the expression of alternative political views. If viewed in isolation, such spaces cannot be said to be truly democratic as they provide a platform**



specifically for these alternative views, but when viewed in the context of society as a whole they can be seen to fulfil the function of a public space. As these manifold functions of third spaces synergistically combine, physical spaces of EDA become tangible examples of alternative ways in which community relations (including both the non-human and human worlds) can be practised.

#### The virtual spaces of EDA.

**‘More than anything, [the Internet] is a site of struggle and can be used by a social movement for their purposes as much as it can be used to transfer money, read newspapers, sell products or look at pornography. Its utility lies in its interconnections with activities in other spaces, in its ability to facilitate different and further reaching social relations’ (Froehling, in Crang et al, 1999:175).**

In the academic literature on virtual space, a ‘prophetic’ and ‘pragmatic’ analysis of the subject can be found. Those like Rheingold (1994) view the Internet as a technology that can offer a route away from the increasingly rapacious processes of control that are enclosing the world. Through linking common interests and enthusiasts through a means that transcends space specific localities, cyberspace can become ‘one of the informal public places where people can rebuild the aspects of community that were lost when the malt shop became the mall’ (Rheingold, in Featherstone & Burrows, 1995:148). As Robins suggests, such views see the Internet as nothing less than a, ‘utopian vision for postmodern times’ (quoted in *ibid.*:135). The more pragmatic view the Internet as little more than an extension of existing telephone technology, simply extending the medium through the integration of text and images (after Barlow, see Featherstone, 1995). In recent years, Environmental Direct Activists have harnessed the contested powers of the Internet. They have taken virtual space in a similar way to their actions in the physical world. Through describing the ways in which EDA-ers have used virtual space, and how it has added another dimension to the combinatorial networks of action, the following section will examine the extent to which EDA-ers have found the virtual world to be prophetic or pragmatic in nature.

In the first instance, research in the third space has illustrated to me that me that EDA-ers have used virtual space quite extensively. Many direct action campaigns, radical environmental groups and concerned individuals have constructed sites on the virtual frontier. In the case of Ashton Court, four such sites were established over the course of the campaign. In order to illustrate some of the issues relating to EDA and the Internet an account follows of a navigation through the World Wide Web. The navigation departed from the virtual locations relating to Ashton Court, and space was then charted beyond into the broader domain of EDA. Figure 4:5 illustrates the locally based webpages that centred on the Ashton Court campaign. The figure outlines the potential route one could take through the World Wide Web from the given starting point, and the ‘link’ options this starting point facilitates.



I launched my cyber-spatial navigation from Bristol Friends of the Earth's website. This starting location was chosen through a combination of best-guessing and arbitrariness (as with most things related to the Web). I had heard through acquaintances in late 1997 that direct action was being mooted at Ashton Court, and envisaged that any long running local environmental campaign may have Friends of the Earth involved to some degree (due to their relatively well-organised structure at local level). One Internet 'search' later I had found my personal point of departure ([www.joolz.demon.co.uk](http://www.joolz.demon.co.uk), see Figure 4:7). Bristol Friends of the Earth's website did indeed have information on the Ashton Court campaign; the site detailed issues concerning quarrying, the recycling of aggregates and perceived threats to local democracy (which are discussed in detail in Chapter Five). The tone of the site was welcoming;

*'Read at your leisure but best of all, switch off your computer, get out there and come and join us!'*  
([www.joolz.demon.co.uk](http://www.joolz.demon.co.uk))

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**Ashton Court Web Links (Local only).**

*If you departed from...*

***Bristol*** Friends of the Earth

<http://www.joolz.demon.co.uk>

→ through a 'campaign' link you can navigate to



<http://www.joolz.demon.co.uk/campaigns/ashtonct/contents.html>

**FoE 'Ashton Court Quarry'**

→ from here, there is an 'environmental action' link to



<http://www.gn.apc.org/cycling/ashtoncourt>

**'Ashton Court Quarry Campaign'**

→ this site links to

**'Friends of Ashton Court'**

<http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/steenson/ashton>

→ and

**'Stop Ashton Court Quarry'**

<http://www.lewi.demon.co.uk/index.htm>

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**Figure 4:7. Navigable virtual spaces focused around the Ashton Court Campaign (local scale).**



Earlier experiences of mainstream environmental groups had made me aware of the potential exclusivity of such organisations. The tone of the FoE site was therefore most refreshing, and coupled to the detailing of phone and email numbers, I was encouraged to contact them. A diary entry made at the time sums up the importance of this initial site in my wider fieldwork;

FoE's Internet site uses the wider (light green) arguments about aggregates... it is framed in such a way that I was inspired / I saw the links bet. quarrying and roads - the inherently illogical aspects of this predict and provide approach etc. So even my intuitive and ethically informed side was bolstered / led by my rational side. the http page gave me Bristol's FoE's phone no. and Sue Carter to contact: so i phoned and they said she was on site. Hence, i went - with a name to ask for - gives you a way in. In short, I suppose, a good 'gatekeeper'... (Appendix I:2)

From even this tentative foray into cyberspace, glimpses of the Internet's capacity were identifiable. The Internet provided a public platform from which environmentalists could frame issues in terms of ecological rhetoric, integrating emotional as well as rational language (see Chapter Five). As Merrick's comment regarding the capturing of 'hearts and minds' noted (see Chapter Three), this use of rhetoric is critically important to engender commitment to the environmental cause. The 'gatekeeper' role of the Internet - its ability to help introduce newcomers to combinatorial networks - is illustrated as it has the capacity to integrate individuals from the virtual domain and encourage them to be active in this, and the physical domain. Even at this early stage it can be seen therefore that cyberspace itself is used by environmentalists to encourage the 'ethic of power' characteristic of EDA in general. The FoE site, as Figure 4:7 illustrates, had links to a number of other local web-sites focusing specifically on Ashton Court. The most comprehensive and active of these was 'The Ashton Court Quarry Campaign'<sup>6</sup>. Through my participant comprehension, I found out that this site was constructed and updated from FoE's office in Bristol, but it was generally compiled by direct activists from 'Craggy Island' and 'Bulgaria'. Due to the autonomous nature of the virtual space created, activists had editorial control over the form and style of this website. As Bulgaria's 'Jo' remarked, 'the web-sites are good because it's your chance to do it yourself' (see Appendix V). The Internet therefore offered activists the chance to configure the world of EDA in the terms of their own choosing - as well as having the ability to time news about the campaign appropriately. It was the Internet, for example, that was primarily used to publicise the existence of the tunnel under the meadow to the press and public. Proof could be given of the tunnel through the Internet's ability to accurately reproduce graphic images. As the

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<sup>6</sup>The Friends of Ashton Court site was 'dead' by the time I navigated to it (i.e. it still existed in cyberspace, but it wasn't being used or updated any more). The 'Friends of Ashton Court' group was set up in order to coordinate the legal campaign against the quarry development. The web-site encouraged the lobbying of council members and local MPs. Since this phase of campaigning had long since ended by the time my cyber-navigation began, it was of no surprise that the web-site had ceased to function actively.



following photos from the activists' website demonstrate;



Figures 4:8 & 4:9. Photos of the tunnel 'Dino' reproduced on the activist's website (<http://www.gn.apc.org/ashtoncourt/cycling>).

Due to the involvement of activists in web-site construction, the 'Quarry campaign' site became dominant over the course of EDA. It was this site that provided up to date information, contact numbers and the full campaign history, as well as detailing press releases, limited press reports, as well as poems and pictures related to the site (more of which in Chapter Five).

These web-sites, as stated above, were useful gatekeepers to the Ashton Court campaign for those not (in)directly related to the individuals involved. Thus virtual spaces provided a similar function as the oral trackways noted above, but for a different public constituency. The unique importance of the Internet lay in its ability to transcend spatially specific localities; the Net provided information to a public constituency not limited merely to Bristol and its environs, but restricted only by the existence of relevant technology. The Internet's near-global reach therefore granted activists the opportunity to publicise their campaigns and politics to a massive public constituency. The spatial scale of the W.W.W., and consequently EDA, became by definition, 'World-Wide'. Due to the ease of communication over this spatial scale the linkages between groups were strengthened. For Ashton Court, this factor was evident when two Polish Earth First! activists visited the site; as my diary recalls,

'fisch and jacek from poland arrived on site today - they found out about



ashton court thru the internet - they are going all round the country gaining info to use to help kick start polish direct action. a road campaign thru a forest was beginning as they were leaving. slides were shown before of how things were done in UK and within a few weeks they had set up a protest site themselves. sarah said its cool how the movement teaches itself' (Appendix I:16)

**The Internet as an interactive technology therefore grants important opportunities for activists. It not only provides access to a worldwide constituency for groups to publicise their action, but it also enables groups to find out about action across the globe. In this way, groups can inform each other of new techniques and tactics, as well being able to globally co-ordinate actions (as in the case of the G8 demonstrations in June 1998, which activists from Ashton Court attended). As a Reclaim the Streets activist states (in Vidal, 1999), due to the exploitation of such technological advances, 'Our resistance is now as transnational as capital itself' (see also Clark & Rose, 1999).**

**As suggested by this last point, the navigation through the W.W.W. from the Ashton Court web-sites does not finish at the local level. Regional links can also be accessed from these sites. Figure 4:10 illustrates these possible linkages;**



Ashton Court Web Links (Regional only).

If you departed from..

**Bristol** Friends of  
the Earth

<http://www.joolz.demon.co.uk>

→ through a 'campaign' link you can navigate to



'A30 campaign'

<http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/3081/A30.html>

→ and



[://www.geocities.com/soho/9000/whatley.html](http://www.geocities.com/soho/9000/whatley.html)

'Whatley Quarry @ Dead Woman's Bottom'

→ from here there are links to

'SchNEWS'

'This Land Is Ours'

'Reclaim the Streets'

'Friends of the Earth'

→ as well as



**Siston Common & Railway Path  
Public Information Team**

and

**STARR - Stop Avon Ring Road**

<http://www.gifford.co.uk/~bedwards/scrappit/index>

'Stop The Avon Ring Road'

→ this site links to

'Bristol & Bath Free Forum'

<http://www.gifford.co.uk/~bedwards/bbff/index.html>

→ this site links to

'Kebele'

<http://www.gifford.co.uk/~bedwards/kebele/index.htm>

Figure 4:10. Virtual spaces focused at the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign (regional scale).

As Figure 4:10 illustrates, both the A30 (Fairmile & Trollheim) site and the Whatley Quarry site can be accessed from local ports. These campaigns were two of the major issues in the



South West region in the 1990s - their geographical proximity is thus reflected in the virtual world. The Whatley Quarry page has a number of EDA links. It provides access to recent local campaigns such as Dead Woman's Bottom and Mendip Rocks (where many activists came from to Ashton Court), as well as to the current (1999) campaign against the Avon Ring Road (where the aggregate from Ashton Court is being utilised). The local sites also granted access to the Bristol & Bath Free Forum (BBFI). This latter organisation fulfils the role at the regional level which groups such as 'Greenet' do at the global level (as noted below). BBFI acts to systematise and formalise the often chaotic (perhaps even rhizomatic, as discussed in Chapter Six) world of the Internet. It creates a space for groups with similar interests, in this case, 'Freethinking, Freespeech, Environmental Issues and Human rights', in order that some type of formalised community can be composed between groups. Such activities can help to bond linkages between disparate groups, and help interested parties access these groups virtually. These organisations can also provide webspace for groups that may not have access in their own right.

Ashton Court Web Links (National only).

*If you departed from...*

**Bristol** Friends of the Earth

<http://www.joolz.demon.co.uk>

→ there are national links to

**Environmental Organisations**

- Friends of the Earth
- Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)
- Countryside Commission

**& Environmental Actions**

- Reclaim the Streets
- Contact Center Network
- McSpotlight
- Mobbs
- OneWorld

Figure 4:11. Navigable virtual spaces focused around the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign (national scale).

As Figure 4:11 outlines, one can navigate to websites that operate on a national from the virtual spaces of Ashton Court. As well as the more mainstream groups such as CPRE, links can be found for 'This Land Is Ours', 'SchNEWS', and 'Reclaim the Streets'. It was these radical



links that were exploited for the eviction email at Ashton Court<sup>7</sup>. Within a few days of eight emails being sent, a number of messages of support were obtained through the 'Net, as well as publication of the situation in both virtual and printed SchNEWS, and Earth First! Action Update.

```
From respondant8@email.address
Hello,
First, congratulations... keep up the good work.
I forwarded this to action update and allsorts. Hope you
didn't already, I'll be in trouble for spamming!
South Downs EF!
```

#### **Earth First! Latest News Uk (mostly)**

##### **Ashton court eviction**

19 June

The head of leisure services at the Bristol City Council let us know yesterday that the Ashton Court Community Festival (apparently the biggest free festival in Europe) has NOT been granted a license yet (even though it is only a month away), because of the presence of the protest camp on adjacent land. Eviction imminent. See website

<http://www.eco-action.org/action/news.html>

The rapid response element inherent within the Internet was therefore significant in this situation. As well as attracting numbers to site (especially since it coincided with many travelling to Glastonbury festival), it also reproduced the 'weaving effect' of oral trackways: activists felt externally supported by the presence of other EDA groups, and by the swelling numbers arriving on site<sup>8</sup>.

'Just as a city does not mean one thing to all people, the 'Internet', and 'cyberspace', while singular words, are not monolithic things. Any theory that attempts to overlay a simplistic unidirectional interpretation on interactions online is likely to find a counterexample' (Light, in Crang et al, 1999:128).

As the navigation of the Internet exemplifies, cyberspace can be experienced in a number of different ways. As Rheingold (1994) suggests, in many respects it does create a community: the Internet makes it easy to communicate quite complex information and images in a fast, interactive way, on a global scale. EDA-ers have taken advantage of this technology by using it for political purposes. The cyberspatial exploration from the virtual sites of Ashton Court has

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<sup>7</sup>Eviction was threatened by Bristol City Council due to their fears of potential trouble at the Ashton Court Festival held in a field next to the camps.

<sup>8</sup>The linkages from these national websites multiply out almost ad infinitum as the W.W.W. realises its capabilities. From these sites foreign cells of radical environmental groups such as Earth First! can be found, as well as foreign environmental campaigns and international co-ordinating groups (such as ASEED). Global 'community' builders such as Greenet and OneWorld (who connect more than 250 social and environmental justice groups worldwide) can also be found at this stage of navigation.



illustrated that EDA-ers do this quite extensively: space has been taken in order provide a platform for eco-political views by a range of EDA groups. These spaces function as another method to inform and educate 'wired' individuals on the existence and development of campaigns. The Internet can be seen as another means of interactively connecting geographically disparate virtual (as well physical) spaces into combinatorial networks. But in much the same way as it does in academic theorisation, the Internet also polarises EDA opinion. Although EDA-ers do exploit the benefits of this technology, many have not bought into Rheingold's vision of the 'Net as a 'postmodern utopia'. As the following replies to my virtual questionnaire demonstrate;

*Has the use of the Internet influenced the way you think about environmental issues, if so, how?*  
it brings the idea of a national group of activists who are nonetheless still local in some way to the fore. the potential for international solidarity is v. strong, but its something we are just getting into

*What do you consider to be the role and importance of the Internet to environmental action?*  
stop going on about the internet

*Do you believe it has influenced the way in which environmental action is taken?*  
please

From respondant9@email.address Fri Feb 27 01:21:09 1998

*What do you consider to be the role and importance of the Internet to environmental action?*  
a waste of time

From respondant4@email.address Tue Feb 17 16:35:48 1998

In the light of these questionnaire responses, there follows a further example that illustrates how I believe the Internet is viewed by most EDA-ers. As the Ashton Court campaign approached its denouement, a fourth Internet site was created - 'Stop Ashton Court Quarry'<sup>9</sup>. The homepage for this site was given the moniker 'Ashton Court Protest Centre'. It could be argued that this moniker attempted to confer to the activity of web-site surfing the status of an act of protest. This argument was roundly damned in many of the questionnaires returned;

The overuse of the internet has made me think that there are

---

<sup>9</sup>This was the first site in relation to the campaign that had a 'hits counter', thus giving some indication as how many people accessed the site. In the first ten months of operation, the sites had been accessed 280 times. However, it is hard to comment on the significance of this site. As with all web-sites its popularity is influenced by the search engines it is registered too, and also the links that lead to it (clearly the topicality of the campaign is also relevant, and as had been stated, Ashton Court was winding down as this site was being set up). The existence of the main web-site (Ashton Court Quarry campaign) will also have influenced the volume of navigators to the new site. The central site remained the key virtual information source regarding Ashton Court, the new site merely added new images to the overall picture of the campaign.



too many people who have the right idea but just like to talk about it.

*Do you believe it has influenced the way in which environmental action is taken?*

Only for the potatoes who used to do stuff and now stare at a screen emailing each other about actions that none of them will go to.

From respondant2@email.address Thu Feb 12 05:03:42 1998

It could be argued that the general message emanating from some direct activists in regard to the Internet and EDA is that, although the dissemination of information is important and crucial to protest activities, this information dissemination and subsequent consumption, ought not be confused with action itself. In other words, due to the power ethic of EDA, use of the Internet should be seen as a support, rather than substitute for action. At Ashton Court however, most EDA-ers viewed the Internet with distrust simply due to an almost comic confusion with the technology involved, rather than a malicious attack on pseudo-activists. As the following quotation from Jo about the construction of the new virtual Ashton Court site (Stop Ashton Court Quarry) suggests;

'It was quite funny the other day because this lad turned up, and he walked into camp, he looked just like a normal person, with glasses on and stuff, and he talked quite quietly, and asked some weird question like, 'Has anyone here had any harrassment from security?' and Ellie starts telling him about this episode where security had been throwing stones at her and a women with a baby, and it turns out that he's read all this stuff on our web-site and he wants to set up his own web-site, and write stuff about this on it.

But it was like he's come out of this computer world with his little sentences and stuff and he wanted to take all the information he was getting back into his little computer world but here he was in the real thing, I hesitate to call it the real world 'cos people who know bugger all about it keep telling me about the real world...surburbia and all that! But it was really strange, it was like he'd been transplanted from one time zone to another, like he's just stepped out of a time machine and gone, 'oh, the thirteenth century! I've read about this!', like we're characters from a story and he's just stepped into the story or something, it was really bizarre - two worlds in space' (see Appendix V).

The humour with regard to the world of the Internet emanates, as the above quotation suggests, from the distance between the virtual and the physical. The day-to-day lives of activists on site is literally a world away from those of individuals in more conventional society, especially perhaps those of 'net-heads' who live great portions of their life in mediated cyberspace. The way the world of 'physical' EDA is experienced is therefore fundamentally different from the phenomenological aspects of the world of 'virtual' EDA. Through my experience in third space I would argue, therefore, that the Internet is not deemed to be the impetus to create a new utopia as it is perhaps more characteristic of modern liberal society than is commonly expressed. The Internet is a technology that creates only 'simulations'. Generally speaking it encourages individuals to sit in front of a PC on their own, communicating



via a machine in a sterile fashion, with at best only virtual human contact, at worst, communicating with 'dead' terminals. The potential for community creation, reflecting Rheingold's vision on public spheres, can only be realised in simulated form. Due to the inherent mediation involved in the technology, any 'authentic' communication is largely precluded. Or as Featherstone & Burrows state, the Internet marks;

'The headlong retreat of the seduced into their increasingly fortified, technologized, privatized worlds away from the increasingly remote and ungovernable spaces occupied by the repressed' (1995:12),

and Elwes views it:

'Individuals are increasingly locked into the isolation of their homes (it isn't safe to go out) and they only make contact with the outside world through telecommunication and networked computer - information systems. Not so much learning as living at a distance' (1993:65).

'The TAZ is a physical place and we are either in it or not. All the senses must be involved. The Web is like a new sense in some ways, but it must be added to the others-- the others must not be subtracted from it, as in some horrible parody of the mystic trance. Without the Web, the full realization of the TAZ-complex would be impossible. But the Web is not the end in itself. It's a weapon' (Bey, [www.hermetic.com/bey/taz\\_cont.html](http://www.hermetic.com/bey/taz_cont.html)).

Despite, or perhaps because, of its advantages, I would conclude that the Internet is treated in a pragmatic fashion by EDA-ers. In the cyber-spatial domain, the physical environment is not directly important as a simulated substitute for this 'reality' is being created. At this level of analysis, the Internet can be seen to be in direct contradiction to one of the main functions of the physical spaces of EDA. Where physical space can be taken to prevent environmental destruction, virtual space can only be taken in order to support those participating in this key activity. As a result, I would argue that most EDA-ers experience the Internet in 'Barlovian' terms; that the Internet is simply another communication device, in many ways similar to oral communication. Thus as Bey states (above), EDA-ers views the web, 'not [as an] end in itself, [but as] a weapon'. As virtual spaces do not create the crucial direct interaction between people and place that helps to bond the physical spaces of EDA, it is easy to valorise these latter arenas over the virtual (and it is clear that some activists do just this). However, as Chapters Five and Seven go on to illustrate, this conclusion is divisive, and emanates from a hierarchical, second space perspective. From a third space perspective, as the following chapters demonstrate, the multiple spaces of EDA combine together to produce a more (con)fused, intertwined and 'entangled' geography of EDA.



### The media spaces of EDA: the mainstream media.

'Never underestimate the capacity of the press to misunderstand the [EDA] movement' (Griffiths, 1997:17).

Through taking and making space, EDA-ers gain publicity for their campaigns through mainstream newspapers and television. The importance of the mainstream media in terms of the publics' awareness of EDA is not lost on activists, as Monbiot states,

'Every battle we fight is a battle for the hearts and minds of other people. The only chance we have of reaching people who haven't yet heard what we've got to say is through the media' (<http://www.oneworld.org/tlio/>).

However, it would be misleading to suggest that EDA-ers have adopted a model of mass media influence that is characteristic of organisations such as Greenpeace (see Holloway, 1999). EDA-ers have noted, perhaps, that in terms of the media, the most important aspect is, 'the control of your own propaganda' (after Watson, 1994), i.e. the 'ability to define' (after Lowe & Morrison, 1988). As stated in Chapter One, the mainstream media have their own agendas which their journalists are employed to serve, and these agendas combine together to create a dominant culture of news reportage. This culture has the effect of defining and framing the news in particular ways. The interaction between this news culture and the practice of EDA is the focal point of this section. The section will illustrate that in most cases journalists shape and structure the practice of EDA in order to conform with their news culture. On some occasions, however, EDA-ers are successful in adapting this media culture to suit their own specific ends. Depending on perspective, this 'radical thirding' can perhaps be seen to result in mutually beneficial news generation, or a 'recuperative' and false representation of the practice of EDA.

Perhaps the central characteristic of the mainstream media's news culture is that of 'conflict'. As Nigel Wade, Foreign Editor of the Daily Telegraph states, 'an element of conflict is always important' (in Chapman 1997:40). At Ashton Court, 'conflict' was framed between quarry company 'Pioneer' on one side, and EDA-ers on the other;



'A quarry company wants to dig for limestone beneath a meadow of rare wild flowers so its going to cut up the field into a giant jigsaw of 20,000 pieces and move it. But eco warriors are fighting to keep the meadow where it is... the scene is set for a battle between the eco warriors and the quarry company' (BBC National News, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1998),





'Quarrying has undeniably created thousands of jobs and pumped millions of pounds into the West's economy, but environmentalists argue that the damage that further development could cause has to be addressed now before the countryside disappears under the diggers forever' (HTV Local News, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1998).

Such binary framing in itself appears to be a fair reflection of the issue in question. Anderson (in Hansen, 1993:56) suggests, however, that this binary framing is turned into a 'morality play' by the media. This is achieved through defining one side in the conflict as 'heroes' and the other as 'villains'. The importance to the media of this 'good' versus 'evil' aspect of conflict is echoed by Wade; he states the media prefers, 'identifiable goodies and baddies, particularly baddies who are always interesting' (in Chapman, 1997:40). Reflecting the theoretical arguments made in Chapter Two, it is perhaps no surprise that the mass media configures the activists - those who can be seen to be threatening to the dominant liberal system - as the 'baddies' in this moral relation; as the following examples from Ashton Court reportage indicate,

## EVENING POST

### Evening Post Comment : Reclaim the Streets 'party'.

It was an excuse for anarchic activists to get drunk and go on a rampage of violence and damage  
Evening Post, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1997, p8.

## EVENING POST

### Mob gripped by road rage.

A number of children, some of whom could not be more than 6 years old, were hurt by the sudden movements in the crowd. I saw children clinging to their parents as their elders and betters hurled missiles at the police. Several of the children were distressed and in tears. On the whole the police behaved faultlessly in a no-win situation.

N. Cavell, Evening Post, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 1998, p8.



• A quarry protester is led away



## EVENING POST

### Postview: Protest scuffles did no good at all.

The ugly scenes at Durnford Quarry on the edge of the Ashton Court estate will have done little to advance the cause of legitimate and peaceful protest. Six people chained themselves to a landrover and had to be cut free by police, who then arrested them. A seventh was involved in a scuffle with lorry drivers waiting to get on site. All have now been released without charge. There were also plenty of genuine local protestors at yesterday's demonstration and it would be wrong to dismiss this as simply rent-a-mob gathering. However, like it or not, they were unable to win their case through the proper democratic processes. Continuing with their lost cause is not only futile but it attracts the wrong element whose tactics are more of an embarrassment than a help.

Evening Post, 30<sup>th</sup> September, 1997, p12.

However, it can be seen that this 'goodie / baddie' dichotomy between authority and EDA-ers has not been wholly maintained by the press. I would argue that the mainstream media have found it difficult to maintain their condemnation of EDA-ers due to the unexpected levels of public support for EDA campaigns. EDA-ers have perhaps struck a chord with the general public through resisting environmental destruction in a non-violent fashion<sup>10</sup>, and fighting for political representation in a system that is riddled with democratic deficits. At Ashton Court, for example, EDA evoked a high level of tacit support from the people of Bristol. The number moved to defend the activists after they were framed as 'baddies' by the local press illustrated this.

## EVENING POST

### Postbag.

I find it disgusting that the Evening Post uses the expression 'unable to win THEIR case' when referring to the Stop the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign in the edition of September 30<sup>th</sup>. This isn't THEIR case, this is ours; this is our park, yours and mine and everyone else's in Bristol. How many people went to the Balloon Festival this year? How many went to the Kite Festival? Who uses the park on weekends and in the evenings? We do.

Who stands up against the wanton destruction of the park for the cause of more roads? A handful of Bristol residents and a few more dedicated outsiders. We should have nothing but respect for these people, not hammering them in the press.

The Evening Post, in describing the campaign as 'a lost cause' has put itself firmly on the side of the continued desecration of the beautiful conservation areas in and around Bristol.

Russell J. Ball, Downfield Rd. Clifton

Evening Post, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1997, p18.

<sup>10</sup> Many of the tactics adopted by EDA-ers, as Doherty (1997) cites, often result in 'manufactured vulnerability'. By, for example, d-locking themselves by the neck to construction equipment, activists put themselves in a position where the risk of incurring physical harm is high. The adoption of such tactics results perhaps in a level of identification and sympathy with activists from the public (even if they do not necessarily agree with EDA-ers aims).



## **EVENING POST**

### **POSTBAG**

#### **Direct Action is the Only Choice**

I write in response to your Postview (Tues 30th Sept) in which you condemn the Ashton Court quarry protest as having done 'little to advance the cause of legitimate and peaceful protest'. The protest was both legitimate and peaceful. Legitimate because our voices have not been heard. Peaceful because it takes a strong commitment to non-violence to remain non-violent whilst being forcibly and painfully evicted.

You say that those opposing the quarry failed to win their case through 'the proper democratic process' but there has been no democratic process.

The Post also implied that the activists were not local, but I can assure you that almost all live in Bristol, unlike those in North Somerset Council who gave the go-ahead. Direct action in this case involved costing Pioneer money. This is the language that they speak and what gives our protest substance.

Brian Chapman, Eastville

Evening Post, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1997, p18.

## **EVENING POST**

### **Postbag**

#### **Bristolians Have Not Had a Voice**

In reply to the defence of the Ashton Court quarry protest, your Editor's note said: 'The protest... has now run its course through the democratic process'. That is precisely the point. It has not. No-one in Bristol has been consulted - the decision has been made unilaterally by North Somerset council, who care as little about Bristol as they do about the Outer Hebrides. We, the Bristolians, will suffer from this vandalism and we have never had a chance to be heard. I would have hoped that a newspaper that calls itself 'The Voice of Bristol' would have nailed its colours to the mast on this particular issue.

John Rogers

Melbourne Rd. Bishopston

Evening Post, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1997, p18.

As a consequence perhaps of this tacit support for EDA, and the unwillingness of the media to alienate their target audience, local journalists altered their framing of activists at Ashton Court. This change of journalistic tack did not involve the integration of rigorous political analysis into reportage<sup>11</sup>, rather the issues involved became reduced to the level of 'human interest'. 'Human interest' framing is a central characteristic of mainstream media news culture. As Peak & Fisher (1998) state, it is an inclusive framing that allows a great proportion of the media's public constituency to identify with and have an interest in the story. The (tacit) public support for activists at Ashton Court thus contributed to a media framing of EDA that transformed them from 'baddies' into 'brave', 'courageous', if somewhat misguided, 'eco-warriors'. For example;

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<sup>11</sup> Even when the opportunity arose to interrogate the political or economic logic motivating the quarry extension, it was not taken - as the following interview by HTV News (20<sup>th</sup> May, 1998) illustrates; 'I'm joined now by Simon Lumkin from Pioneer Aggregates, Do we really need any more quarries Simon?',

'Well, yes we do. The public at large create a demand for our product, and they are used in roads, hospitals, schools, and we need an ongoing demand to maintain the supply'.



## EVENING POST

**Picture of the week: A brave Ashton Court protester demonstrates...beneath the landrover**

Evening Post, October, 4<sup>th</sup>, 1997, p10.



### **Comment:**

There are many people who are passionate about environmental issues who put up with appalling conditions to make their point.

Evening Post, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 1998, p5.

## The Guardian The Observer

### **Commentary: the far sighted view from the tripod.**

The most awe inspiring political figure I've met this year goes by the name of Ballin. For 16 days and nights, he lives ten feet above the ground, dangling from a scaffolding tripod, exposed to the bitterest winds of winter, descending only to cook and defecate, available for civilised discussion about national transport policy with anyone who passed by the crossroads where he perched...he looks like a crank, and is behaving with pitiful lack of respect for what seem to be the economic trends....

H. Young, The Guardian, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1996, p18.

In the context of EDA more broadly, the human interest angle was most obvious in the 'iconic' representation of the 'Fairmile 5', principally 'Swampy' and 'Animal' (see Bellos, 1997, Animal, 1997, Vidal, 1997, & Gibbs, 1997). At Ashton Court, similar individuals were focused upon, principally Dr Margaret Jones.

## EVENING POST

### **Doctor Dolittle**

Margaret Jones used to be a college lecturer - but she gave it up after work got in the way of her political protests.

M. Murphy, Evening Post, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1999, p1.





### **Lecturer opts for life on road as an 'eco-warrior'**

Dr Jones displays a resilience that is winning her fame to rival that of Swampy in the environmental movement.

S. O'Neill, DailyTelegraph, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 1999, p9.

The selection of these activists as the 'hooks' for media coverage seemed somewhat arbitrary, yet their 'socio-demographics' could perhaps be seen to be a relevant issue in their selection. Just as Animal and Swampy were paraded in the media as transient drop-outs from good 'Middle England' stock (see Behan, 1998, Leonard & Barwick, 1997), so this general configuration was apparent in the characterisation of Margaret Jones;



### **Lecturer opts for life on the road as an 'eco-warrior'**

Margaret Jones used to lead a comfortable life lecturing on American literature and debating the merits of its great authors. Today she leads an altogether different existence, cold and alone in a derelict warehouse at Siston Common on the eastern edge of the city. But Dr Jones has chosen rather than fallen on hard times. She has swapped the contemplative life of an academic for the arduous world of the full-time 'eco-warrior'. She is currently on the 14th day of a solitary protest against the construction of the £30 million Avon Ring Road.

S. O'Neill, Daily Telegraph, January, 26<sup>th</sup>, p9.

It can be seen therefore that EDA is turned into a 'human interest' story by mainstream journalists as such inclusive story 'hooks' appeal to a wide constituency and help to increase audiences. EDA also provides another saleable element to journalists through being inherently associated with 'dramatic' events. At Ashton Court, local journalists seized upon any elements of drama; as the following excerpts for news reports demonstrate,



'There's a lot of veterans here from other protests, and fences aren't really a problem...they can come down as quickly as they can go up!' ('Nissan', on BBC News West, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1998),



'We are prepared to do [pause] what we can to cost them money without getting ourselves arrested, at least at this stage of the protest. Later on I imagine there will be plenty of arrests and we'll be spending a few nights in a few police cells, and we're prepared to do that because we believe in what we're doing strongly enough' ('Mary', on HTV News, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1998).



The media’s hunger for drama even led them to regularly contact activists in search of a story; this occurred at Ashton Court on numerous occasions,

Scott got another phone call from the 'Post' today, wanting to know when 'actual' direct action would begin - scott said it would happen when it happens... (Appendix I:18)

It can be seen that the ‘dramatic’ spin applied to human interest versions of EDA were helped by the innovatory nature of action. The unveiling of the tunnel at Ashton Court, for example, provoked a flurry of media interest (including the arrival of national BBC cameras to film inside the tunnel);



'Reporter: 'He identifies himself only as Rapunzel, but he is a veteran of many tunnel protests in many parts of the country'.  
'Rapunzel': 'Its just such an effective way of stopping them. In alot of protests its been that case that where trees have lasted for hours, tunnels have lasted for days - thats what really frightens them, and annoys them, and costs them alot more money to evict - therefore its the thing that makes them think twice about doing these schemes' (BBC National News, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1998).

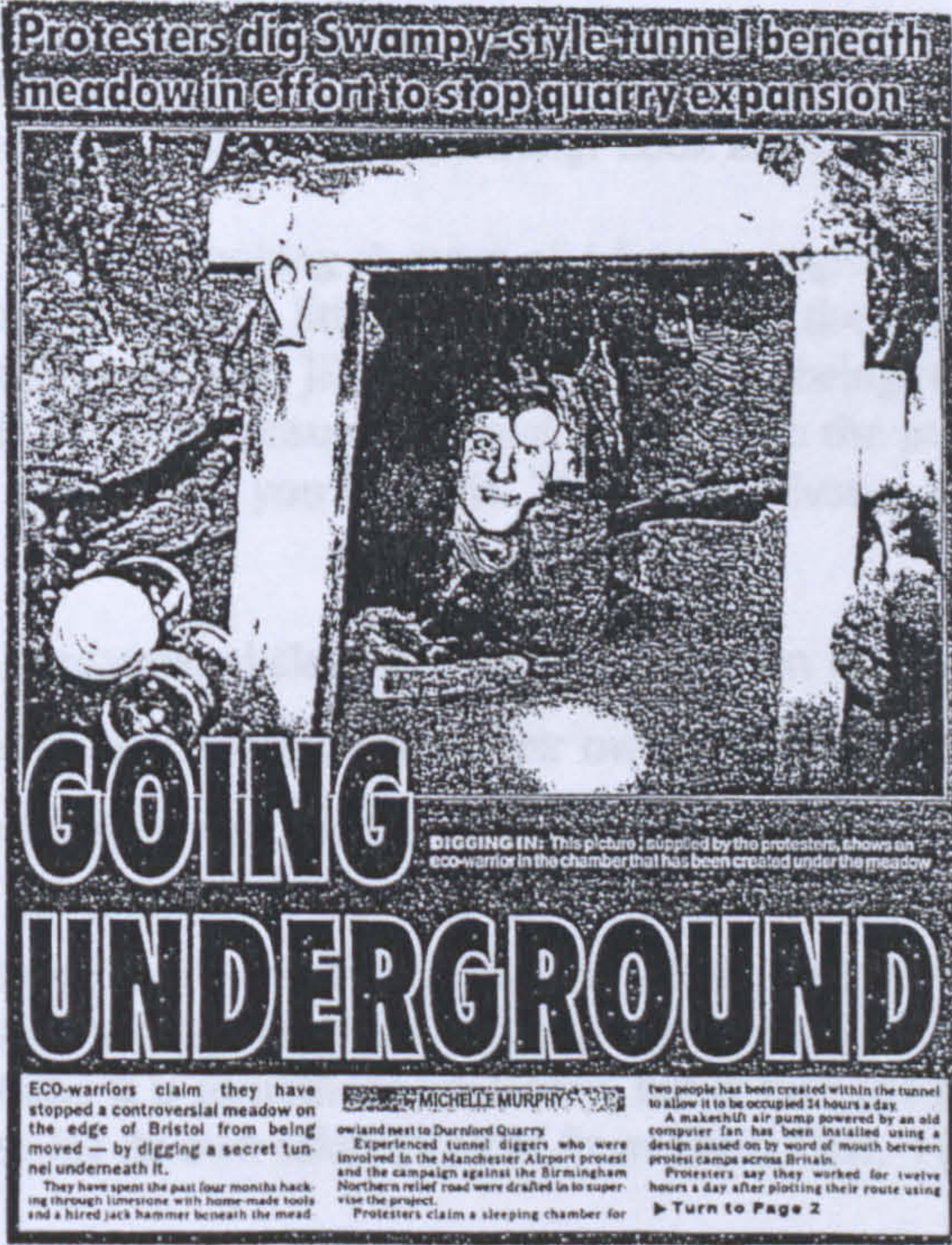


Figure 4:12. The tunnel unveiling made front page news on the Evening Post (September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1998, p1)



The dramatic, innovative, and personality based nature of EDA can be seen to appeal to the news culture of the mainstream media. EDA's mediagenic quality thus raises questions as to the dominant purpose of EDA activity - is environmental action literally 'made for TV?' From my experience in third space, many of the actions that prompted media coverage involved much time-consuming effort (for example, tunnel excavation). It was highly unlikely that such effort would have been made purely with the media in mind, especially due to the conflicting objectives of the respective parties;

'Specifically, when you're all planning an action, there often comes a point when someone, usually new to campaigning who is impressed by the media interest, pipes up with, 'But what will the press say?' The argument then always come round to 'Who gives a fuck?' because the press will say what they say. At the end of the day, they are there to make a story, and we are there to make the difference' (Evans, 1998:179).

As noted above, most EDA-ers are motivated by the goal of environmental protection, whilst most journalists are motivated by the need to capture a newsworthy story. At this level of analysis, these two objectives often clash irreconcilably. Evans' account of one occasion at Newbury serves as a notable exemplar of this point;

'I interview[ed] a Meridian film crew about what their angle was as a particularly stunning avenue of huge sycamores crashed down.

'Well, yes, we've not actually going to do a report as such – we're just here in case anything happens'.

'What do you mean? Things are happening. Look at those beautiful trees on the ground'.

'Um, actually we were looking at more of a human angle'.

'Like what exactly?' After a little prompting, this was the reply:

'I mean just look at the way Jill Phipps [who died by being run over by a truck at an action] brought the whole issue of animal exports into the public eye'.

Death. That's my friends, you bastards. That's me' (Evans, 1998:111).

As a result of this fundamental clash of objectives between EDA and the mainstream media, most activists operate in accordance with their own cultural values, rather than being distracted by the objectives of mainstream media. As the following activist states,

'In the end I came to the conclusion that my whole outlook was...radically different from that of the mainstream media. Mainstream publicity is a bit like being arrested. It is a fact of life and it is sometimes necessary, but it isn't the point and you don't try to make it happen for its own sake' (Voices from Earth First, 1998:36).

Due to clash of objectives between the media and EDA-ers, it can be argued that activists have formed a cynical and pragmatic view of the media. Despite, or perhaps because, of this view, activists are willing to invoke a radical thirding in the arena of mainstream media news culture. This has been achieved at a superficial level by exploiting the media's preoccupation with



'human interest'. As Chapter Two discussed, many journalists are reliant on stories 'falling on their laps' due to the pressures of a busy newsroom. Due to the public's appetite for the human face of EDA, activists have been able to exploit this factors by creating stories for journalists. Perhaps the most 'dramatic' story that the Ashton Court campaign was able to muster in the local press was one that was initiated in this way, and was in fact completely fictitious. Following a number of attacks on the camp by security guards, Pioneer sacked five local guards who they perceived were responsible for the incident. One of them visited the camp and stated his wish to gain his revenge on Pioneer for this sacking by publicly changing his allegiance to support the activists. Despite the animosity felt towards the guards, Pioneer remained the common enemy for both parties, so the opportunity was taken to contact the media with the 'story'. It resulted in headline news in both local newspapers and television;



'Protesters who are camped in a nearby wood have an unexpected new recruit, until last week Mark Barnes was a security guard, but now he's switched camps, and he's protecting the meadow instead. 'I'm going to stay with them in the camp, cos I knows exactly what goes on, being a ex-guard I knows all the tricks of the trade, I'm going to help as much as I can, I dont knows if we can save the meadow, but I'll be here till the bitter end with them' (BBC News West, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1998).

## EVENING POST

### Defector!

A security man who lost his job guarding Ashton Court quarry told today how he has a new life – as an eco-warrior. Mark Barnes, aged 31, has swapped his uniform for scruffy clothes and he has a new home in the camp on the edge of Durnford Quarry near Bristol. Former nightclub bouncer Mr Barnes said he became sympathetic to the protesters' cause as he patrolled the camp's boundaries over the last two months and forged friendships with the campaigners, who are fighting plans to expand the quarry, over late-nights cups of tea round the camp fire. He said, 'I know I was there to make sure they didn't cause any problems with the quarry, but I couldn't help myself believing in what they were doing'. He claimed he was sacked by Pinkerton's Security after it launched an investigation after complaints from protesters that some guards had trampled over tents last week. He said: 'The real reason I was sacked was because they knew I'd made friends with some of the protesters. These people have become my mates. I wouldn't want to harm them.'

M. Murphy Evening Post, 20<sup>th</sup> May, 1998, p1.

At this superficial level, activists can be seen to have exploited the media's and public's appetite for the human face of EDA and become to some degree 'primary definers' of news reportage. At this level of analysis, the relationship between EDA and the media is mutually beneficial. With the tacit support of many of the public, activists could use the media for mobilisation, validation and enlargement (i.e. to 'send their message'<sup>12</sup>, whilst the mass media could use EDA to 'make [their] news' (after Gamson & Wolfsfield, 1993). Doherty takes this position,

<sup>12</sup>As Corporate Watch (1998) state: 'This media blitz probably did a great deal to make protest more acceptable in Britain, at a time when there is evidence to suggest that the state was preparing for major anti-environmentalist offensive'.



**'by prolonging evictions and creating a confrontation with the authorities which can last for weeks or even months, rather than the few hours duration of most protest actions, they [the activists] have captured significant amounts of public attention. One of their clearest successes has been in making and sustaining a dramatic news story' (1997).**

However, at a deeper level of analysis, the fundamental clash between EDA and the news culture of the mainstream media has led to an antipathy on behalf of activists in regard to this media;

**'In its way the mighty ecowarrior is just as damaging a myth as the Daily Mail's image of us as bored dole spongers sat up trees all day taking heroin and having an easy life. The eco warrior myth says that there are these heroes out there saving the planet, so you don't have to worry. And these heroes are superhuman, totally committed experts, not ordinary people like you. There's nothing that an uninformed untrained little person like you could actually do. Believe me, its all bollocks. There's all kinds of people out there, alot of them very much like you. WHOEVER YOU ARE' (Merrick 1997:57).**

It can be seen therefore, as Merrick's quotation implies, that at the heart of the interaction between the mass media and EDA is a fundamental conflict in terms of conceptualisations of power. Through focusing on human interest and dramatic conflict, the mass media generally turned EDA into a form of entertainment. A rigorous political debate on the issues involved failed to occur in this space: very little investigation was made concerning the economics or political motivations of quarrying, the crises in democracy that allowed the quarry to be extended, or the ecological debacle that constitutes translocation. Likewise, little journalistic coverage focused on the networked nature of protests, and the joint campaigning many activists did on a host of issues. As a result the media's framing of EDA was oriented towards entertaining their audience, rather than politicising them. This is an objective in marked contrast to that of EDA-ers, who as previous sections have illustrated, and the next section goes to discuss further, attempt to empower and encourage individuals to become political and active through 'taking' and 'making' space. As one activist states,

**'Many people consider that to change the world we must change peoples' minds and that this is best done through the media. But what are we changing their minds for? It doesn't matter what people believe if they are too alienated and disempowered to act on it, and the mass media is above all a tool of disempowerment and alienation' (Voices from Earth First, 1998:37).**

Activists therefore perceive the mainstream media to have effectively moulded the phenomena of EDA in a way that suits their own specific agendas - or, in the jargon of situationist theory, the mass media 'recuperated' direct action. Recuperation, as the radical journal 'Aufheben' (1996:34) cites, is an attempt to, 'appropriate antagonistic expressions and render them harmless through transformations and integration into some form of commodity'. With this in mind, the media can be seen to have taken an apparently political issue with radical overtones



and transformed it into a non-political issue that is safe for their public constituency's consumption. Or, as 'Do or Die' (the radical environmental journal) states, 'Our actions are packaged; wrapped up in a sugar coating to make them palatable for the middle classes to swallow' (1998:139). Figure 4:13 outlines an example of the media's recuperation of EDA, and activists' response to this process.

### **Recuperation & EDA.**

**Empirical example:**

#### ***Media Framing of EDA:***

**'Campaigners fighting plans by a quarry to expand into woodland near Bristol tried a game of frisbee to help their cause today - but it didn't work, and a wild flower meadow that they've been trying to protect was fenced off. It will now be dug up to make more room for Durnford Quarry at Ashton Court' (BBC News West, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1998).**

#### ***EDA Comment on the media:***

**'The problem is that they have a way of trivialising everything and its like you doing an interview with someone and you're saying its all to do with employment and that this is employing a few people for a short time, but recycling could employ more for a longer period, and rubble is dumped, when it could be recycled. And all they write is what your mother thinks of you being out here and having dirty finger nails they want to make you into something, what is the label we could put on this person, its either cute fluffy hippy, or dole scrounging hard core criminal scumbag, they just cant accept that you're there cos you're concerned about something and write about the thing you're concerned about' (Activist Interview, see Appendix V).**

#### ***EDA Analysis:***

**'Capitalism assimilates our ideas and actions, dilutes the passion and anger behind them, and then packages them as something harmless or even beneficial to itself, to sell back to us for our own consumption' (Voices from Earth First, 1998:136).**

**Figure 4:13. Recuperation & EDA.**

Interaction between EDA and news culture has led therefore to a number of differing representations of the practice of protest. Initially EDA has been framed as a conflict between 'goodies' (authority) and 'baddies' (activists). Yet due to a growing level of (tacit) public support for activists, the journalistic spin on EDA developed into a dramatic human-interest angle. Activists have been able, at a superficial level, to exploit these factors by becoming (temporary) primary definers for the media. However, the media's wish to frame EDA purely in terms of 'non-threatening entertainment' has led to a fundamental conflict between the two factions. Although the mass media are undeniably useful to EDA-ers in terms of opening up new public constituencies to their message, the lack of autonomy to define the way in which their message is framed in this media has led activists to become disinterested and cynical about the utility of pandering to the mainstream media. As a consequence, EDA-ers have turned to an alternative media source that is more likely to favourably report EDA activity: EDA-ers have



acted upon their own ethic of power and created media outlets themselves.

The media spaces of EDA: 'Alternative' Media.

**'The first rule of eco-activism and the media: control your propaganda' (Watson, 1994:187).**

**'A large number of people are so unhappy with the way the national news agenda is twisted so easily by spin doctors and corporate strategists. However, rather than just be media critics touting a cutting diagnosis, we felt it was important to be active with the medicine. Necessity has bred ingenuity' (Carey, co-editor, Squall, in McKay, 1998:63).**

**'My attitude is that if you don't like what you see on television, don't whinge, make it yourself' (Hartzell, co-founder of Undercurrents, in Brass & Poklewski Koziell, 1997:97).**

In direct response to the fourth democratic deficit outlined in Chapter Two, EDA-ers have established spaces in the media arena in order to define EDA in terms complementary to their cultural preferences. The spread of technologies such as personal computers, desktop publishing software, camcorders, editing equipment, videos and televisions have facilitated this end. This section will examine the ways in which EDA-ers have taken space in the media arena, and how these spaces integrate and help to structure the EDA network.

At Ashton Court, activists produced many leaflets and fly posters in order to publicise the anti-quarry campaign. Activists circulated these leaflets and posters to visitors on site and widely throughout Bristol. The environmental vocabularies used on these leaflets will be examined in Chapter Five, but a number of general examples of their style follow;

**'Warning - some people are convinced that there may be a FREE PARTY TODAY in the QUARRY  
What would happen then? there are fears of civil disobedience - and even damage.  
Would that be a good thing? What do you think?  
We urge everyone, therefore: Be Creative, Be Imaginative, Be Vigilant...You have been warned!' (Excerpt from leaflet circulated at the Ashton Court Festival by Craggy Island activists, July, 1998).**

**'Action camp NOW!  
Come to craggy island, drink tea, and stay. Pinkertons (ex-newbury) guards - we need help NOW, NOW, NOW! Bristol City Council is threatening an imminent illegal eviction. Stop the quarry expansion and the supply of aggregate to the controversial Avon Ring Road.  
ya coming then? ah, go on, go on, go on, go on!' (Flyer disseminated by Craggy Islanders around Bristol, Summer, 1998).**

From these brief examples, the prime function of the alternative media as a whole can be seen. These publications exist to encourage action. In line with EDA's ethic of power, these leaflets



attempt to move individuals to active participation. As SchNEWS (an alternative zine operating at the national level) states;



'Ultimately, the idea of [the EDA-related media] is to encourage people to get off their bums, go see things for themselves and make up their own minds' (SchNEWSround, 1997:2).

One of the key distribution spaces for leaflets produced by the activists at Ashton Court was 'Kebele', a vegan café and squat in Bristol. Kebele users also produced an alternative zine that focused on Ashton Court. The 'Kebelian Voice', which later became known as 'Bristle' (a 'corruption' of Bristol, but also to *'show anger or desire to resist'*) gave coverage to the Ashton Court campaign from the mid-90s onwards, through the legal challenges, on to the inception of direct action. The style and tone of 'Bristle' is radical with a harsh edge. Its 'desire to resist' is often articulated in anger (rather than wit) and this is most conspicuous when directed towards the police. (It was the only zine, however, to mention the fact that police had indeed been given orders to arrest as many Ashton Court protesters as possible and assign charges at a later date). For example;

'...Despite this criminal activity on the part of the security, our boys in blue are more intent on prosecuting peaceful protesters with whatever spurious charge they can concoct. Action on orders from Police HQ at Portishead, they are attaching a massive exclusion zone as bail conditions. Two women have already been charged. The security staff are just pawns in the system...the real target is Pioneer Aggregates who have bullied their way through the planning system and are trashing our park in order to satisfy their Australian shareholders greed for money. The camp is there for anyone who would like to do anything to support the campaign. It is our park - if we don't stop them, who will?' (Bristle 1998:14).

Complementing the main purpose of encouraging action, both the 'Voice' and 'Bristle' formed a space in which alternative groups could get in contact, gain information, and work together on EDA. They provided a 'public space' for local campaigns, such as 'Scrappit' – Against the Avon Ring Road, demonstrations against IKEA, as well as for squatting groups. Kebele and its publications also functioned as the informal focus for the Bristol branches of This Land is Ours, Earth First! and Reclaim the Streets, and the café itself was an information centre and distribution point for national alternative zines such as Squall, SchNEWS, Do or Die, Green Anarchist and Corporate Watch (some of whose websites were encountered during the Internet navigation, and a discussion on their zines follows). Kebele was also one focus for the distribution of the West Country Activist (WCA) newsletter. This group had a regional focus, trying to build a network between those activists from Cornwall up to the Bristol and Bath area.



The newsletter was a free, irregularly published A4 sheet, and acted as a bulletin board for environmental campaigns occurring in the West. As such it was a useful disseminator of reports and publicity for forthcoming actions at Ashton Court, as well as the protests at Dead Women's Bottom, Radstock railway, Hillgrove Vivisection, as well as the growing campaigns against Genetically Modified Food.

Kebele users were frequent visitors to a wide range of physical EDA spaces around Bristol, and Kebele itself became in turn a (home)place (after hooks, 1994) for numerous activists to rest and recuperate<sup>13</sup>. As a result of this reciprocal movement between spaces, a flow of alternative publications, along with oral communication, was informally instigated. The appearance in many spaces of EDA of well-read and dog-eared copies of alternative zines was commonplace as the distributive function of the emerging combinatorial networks was practised.

However, Kebele was not the only node in the specific media, as well as broader EDA, network centred at Ashton Court. The local Friends of the Earth office in Bristol was often used for printing leaflets for the campaign, as well as providing access to telephone, computer and the noted Internet facilities for activists. FoE also produced a free quarterly newsletter 'InFoe', which detailed protests in which the organisation were involved. Local FoE was central to the Ashton Court campaign through the conventional legal channels, and some FoE affiliated individuals, alongside WCA members, instigated the first direct action demonstrations at the site. As a result, 'InFoe' covered the campaign at Ashton Court regularly; articles were written by activists on site, and published directly in the newsletter.

The writer of the 'InFoe' articles was central in the direct action at Ashton Court, but the audience for which the FoE newsletter was written, although sympathetic to NVDA, was perhaps a more passive one than, for example, that for 'Bristle'. This point can perhaps contribute to the tone and style of the 'InFoe' report. Although contestable, the articles can be seen to involve a level of self-recuperation, putting forward the issues and day to day realities of site life in a friendly, and perhaps non-threatening way. One could argue that activists do not come across in the 'InFoe' article as radical challengers to the status quo, complementing perhaps the mandate of FoE itself. Yet the article itself is a faithful representation of activities on-site, contributing evidence to the suggestion that all activists have many dimensions to their personalities, they are 'half fluffy / half spikey', and can appeal to a wide variety of environmental sympathisers (see Chapter Five). An excerpt from 'InFoe' follows;

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<sup>13</sup>Autonomous space: there's a storm brewing in every teacup. All across the country empty buildings are being squatted, tea is being brewed and friendly subversion is being spread through Britain's shopping streets. The appeal of a squat cafe to active groups is clear: an autonomous zone is created in the heart of the community, serving as a space from which individuals involved in direct action can organise and also as an attempt at 'activist' involvement in their local community. The concept is simple - take a disused space somewhere with a fair number of passers-by and open it to the public, offering them tea and anarchy' (Do or Die, 1999:130).



'The living room in the New State of Bulgaria has now been enclosed with tarpaulins and curtains to keep the draughts out and warmth in and a chimney has been put up to take the smoke away from our eyes. To paraphrase an old saying, 'Winter is the mother of invention'.

It has been alleged that many of the security guards have been fed a steady stream of scare stories about protester violence so we have had to spend many hours explaining to the why we are there and what our ethic of non-violence means. Several guards have left their jobs after finding out that we were human beings and had quite a good argument actually.

Meanwhile, the meadow is being moved daily to the edge of the busy Weston to Clevedon road, where even the roadside blackberries are choked and wizened by the fumes and delicate orchids are unlikely to flourish. Standing there, the meaning of the word 'ecosystem' is brought into focus. We cannot simply take up the turf and insert it elsewhere, away from the multitude of factors which made the life in the area what it was. The place is part of the whole. An ecosystem is not the sum of the parts – the species of plants, invertebrates and birds found directly on it. It is important that developers and planners are not allowed to use this technique – which has never succeeded – as a way to edit valuable habitats out of the cost benefit equation' (Wilding, 1998:4).

The point that 'InFoe' represents the interests of Friends of the Earth, a large 'thresholder' corporation, is exemplary in the case of the alternative media. Since FoE works on a multitude of campaigns that often involve dialogue and partnership with business concerns, this status seems to effect the tone and style of the reports published in their newsletter. Reflecting the arguments discussed in Chapter Two, it is unlikely perhaps that FoE would risk the co-operation (and advertising revenues) from business concerns (such as Friends Provident, South West Electricity Board, as well other financial advisors and solicitors) by taking an overtly critical line in their magazine. Equally, FoE did not look to directly connect itself with radical EDA groups, including only a contact list for more respectable environmental groups, such as the Green Party, Greenpeace, and the Genetic Engineering network, in its publications. Unlike the majority of other EDA zines, therefore, InFoe was not an absolutely autonomous media space; the group's 'thresholder' status (see Maloney et al, 1994) granted its participation in EDA, but also prohibited overtly radical extremes of involvement<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> A taped conversation I had with an activist at Ashton Court touched on this subject: 'Well, direct action has been quite recent hasn't it, its only been since about 1991 that people have been doing that peace camp type thing in environmental protests. I think FoE didn't quite know where to put themselves in regard to protest / campaigning, things like Manchester airport [where Scott was, so this is where she probably got this info] they were campaigning there, so were loads of other people, Manchester FoE separated themselves from EDA, since the media tried to connect them to it, to violence etc, so they tried to disassociate themselves. I think that that's one of the big contentious points, people say that FoE should be doing more, they are not doing enough, should be giving us more money etc, but I think they are trying to preserve their political acceptability, you can't go around saying that this group should be doing this and this group should be doing more or differently, since one of the biggest problems is that the whole environmental movement has been divided abit and its ending up in infighting and I think that's probably quite a clever tactic on behalf of the political types and corporate owned media...cos media isn't this independent thing, its something with its own agenda, perhaps the journalists individually are thinking 'yeah, good for them', but their editorial control is from a corporate viewpoint...if they go up and ask [foe] do you approve of this action, they're not going to say, 'yeah, good on them, go and



As the Internet section illustrated, Ashton Court was linked to a variety of media sites at the national as well as local and regional levels. National groups such as SchNEWS and Earth First! featured in this virtual sphere, and also contributed to the Ashton Court campaign through more traditional newsprint communication. Ashton Court was covered frequently in Earth First! Action Update and SchNEWS. These publications often re-printed the information given in site leaflets, or copied verbatim email communication between groups. This coverage not only transferred the editorial control to the Ashton Court activists themselves, it also served to decrease the workload for the activists in the publishing organisations. On some occasions however, the campaign would feature more prominently in these newsletters, particularly SchNEWS. On these occasions, activists at these groups would write most of the text, transferring their irreverent, satirical style and tone to the piece, as the following from SchNEWS 183 exemplifies;



SOD OFF!!

*"You can't move a grassland without changing its environment - and if you change that, the community of plants and animals it supports is bound to change too. The first prerequisite for protecting an SSSI\* is to leave it where it is. Quite simply, if you move it, you lose it."*

- Dr Richard Jefferson, English Nature ecologist

The sign on the entrance to Ashton Court Park reads. "You are visiting a beautiful and peaceful park. Help keep it that way so that everyone can enjoy it." So what do North Somerset Council do? They give planning permission for the extension of Pioneer Aggregates Durnford Quarry into 20 acres of the park! But how come a park given in 1959 to the people of Bristol, under the condition that "no part of it should be set aside for works which would detract from its value as a recreation ground or prejudice the enjoyment of the people" can be excavated for minerals? You tell us!

Despite ongoing protests, Pioneer began removing topsoil from the park's wildflower meadow last week, which is a site of Nature Conservation Interest, and home to three rare species of wild orchids as well as nesting skylarks, foraging bats, and badgers. The company plan to spend £1 million to remove 51 per cent of the twenty acre site in two metre square chunks, to be relaid half a mile away in a field on the other side of the quarry.

This process is known as translocation - and it has been an unmitigated disaster when tried elsewhere round the country.

The benefit to EDA campaigns of publications like SchNEWS can be found in their ability to connect apparently disparate campaigns into a national network, and provide a printed platform

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beat up a security guard or burn some machinery' cos they are trying to maintain their mainstream acceptability...' (see Appendix V).



for their communication. This function is one that has developed throughout the 1990s. At its inception SchNEWS was a publication set up by 'Justice?', a group campaigning against the Criminal Justice & Public Order Bill (1994). This group (amongst others who rallied against the CJB) brought together ravers, squatters, hunt saboteurs and environmental activists for the first time, the CJB transferring a unity and cohesion to a disparate melange of groups. Throughout the decade, however, SchNEWS has evolved into a central pillar in the alternative media, fulfilling unifying roles, as well as providing legal help for activists. As Warren, one of the core team of a dozen writers, states,

'SchNEWS is more than a newsletter. People call us all the time for help. It's like a CAB [Citizens' Advice Bureau] for activists. If someone has been arrested at a protest, we know the lawyers that can help' (Bellos, 1997:19).

This 'CAB' function can be seen to be part of a wider trend that is exemplified by SchNEWS, but is also apparent in the EDA movement as a whole. This trend has seen groups that were originally set up to perhaps campaign on a single issue, broadening out and forging linkages both with existing radical groups, but also creating new issues for campaigning. As SchNEWSround (a compilation issue) states,



'In the face of attempts to trivialise and isolate us we have learnt probably our most important lesson – that the battles we started off fighting – against profit-producing car culture, against attacks on our right to party and protest – are linked with many other struggles in Britain and abroad. Making these links, destroying the myth of 'single issue' politics, is probably the most important step we have taken over the last year. And its about time – because If things are gonna change then such movements have got to grow' (1997:4).

Activists have not only taken space in the media arena through the printed word. The relative availability of camcorder and editing technology has enabled EDA-ers to make videos in order to disseminate their message. A host of video activist organisations have germinated in recent years; from the inception of 'Small World Media' (now known as 'Undercurrents') in 1994, groups such as 'Conscious Cinema', '56a Infoshop' and 'i-Contact', have been set up to provide media support for grassroots campaigns oriented towards environmental and broader social justice issues. Of these groups, 'Undercurrents' was probably the most well-established (until its demise in May, 1999). 'Undercurrents' emanated from the M11 protest site in London in 1993 when four activists attempted to publicise the action by documenting the campaign on camcorder. Although it fulfilled media culture criteria in terms of conflict and drama, it was rejected by all British mass media networks as 'too political' (see McIver, <http://ma.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/kids/ma.theory.1.3.db>). This distribution problem was mitigated at the end of M11 campaign when the activists set up their own production and distribution



company. 'Undercurrents' produced eponymous video magazines of 'camcorder journalism', collated from campaigns across the country, as well as around the world. 'Conscious Cinema', a video activist operation based in Brighton, was also set up in order to give a voice to campaigners overlooked or recuperated by the mainstream media; as D, of Conscious Cinema states,



'People phone us up and say they want to make a film on this or that. As long as the stories they want to cover are connected with environmental or social justice - however abstract - we can offer ideas, equipment and the edit suite. We will either work with people on their project, or, if they want, just show them how the equipment works and leave them to it' (SchNEWSround, 1997:25).

Both operations produce regular videos that can be bought or hired for personal or public screening. The range of issues covered by the videos, as the above quotations imply, include many environmental and social justice issues. A typical example includes;



**Road blues** Newbury construction workers are serenaded  
**Global news** From Spain to Papua New Guinea, campaigns from around the world  
**Swan farm** The struggle to remain a traditional Romany community  
**Where there's a wig there's a way** Music emerging within the DIY culture  
**Wild horses of Newbury** A strange occurrence when horses get in front of chain saws  
**Alien nation** A resident fights back when a CCTV camera points at his window  
**Songs for the salvage rider** Citizens get active when US laws threaten old growth forests  
**Reclaiming the streets** Anti-car parties spring up around the country  
**If I had a hammer** Four women disarm a British made warplane bound for Indonesia  
**Snodland news** Another ridiculous story from ITN  
**Judge for yourself** Using the internet to combat McDonald's global reach  
**The vid of Oz** How video is being used to campaign in Australia  
**Making of undercurrents** Behind the scenes with the video crew

From <http://www.freedombooks.co.uk/uc6.htm>

Figure 4:14. Typical example of an Undercurrents videozine sleeve contents.

The campaign at Ashton Court had the go ahead to make a film for the June 1998 edition of Undercurrents. A friend of the campaign, who went on to set up 'I-contact' in Bristol, had lent a camcorder to the site, and activists had volunteered to do the filming. Having had no experience of video activism, and being pressured for time, the film was incomplete by the editing deadline, and thus failed to be included in the edition. Ashton Court did have video publicity though beyond the UK. Two EF! activists from Poland visited the site and filmed the



meadow and camps, as well as undertaking interviews with activists. Footage was compiled with others from direct action sites around the country (including Lyminge Forest, Bingley, and the BNRR) to be disseminated amongst activists in Poland (where direct action had just broken out against motorway construction through an ancient forest).



<http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/Canopy/1651/>

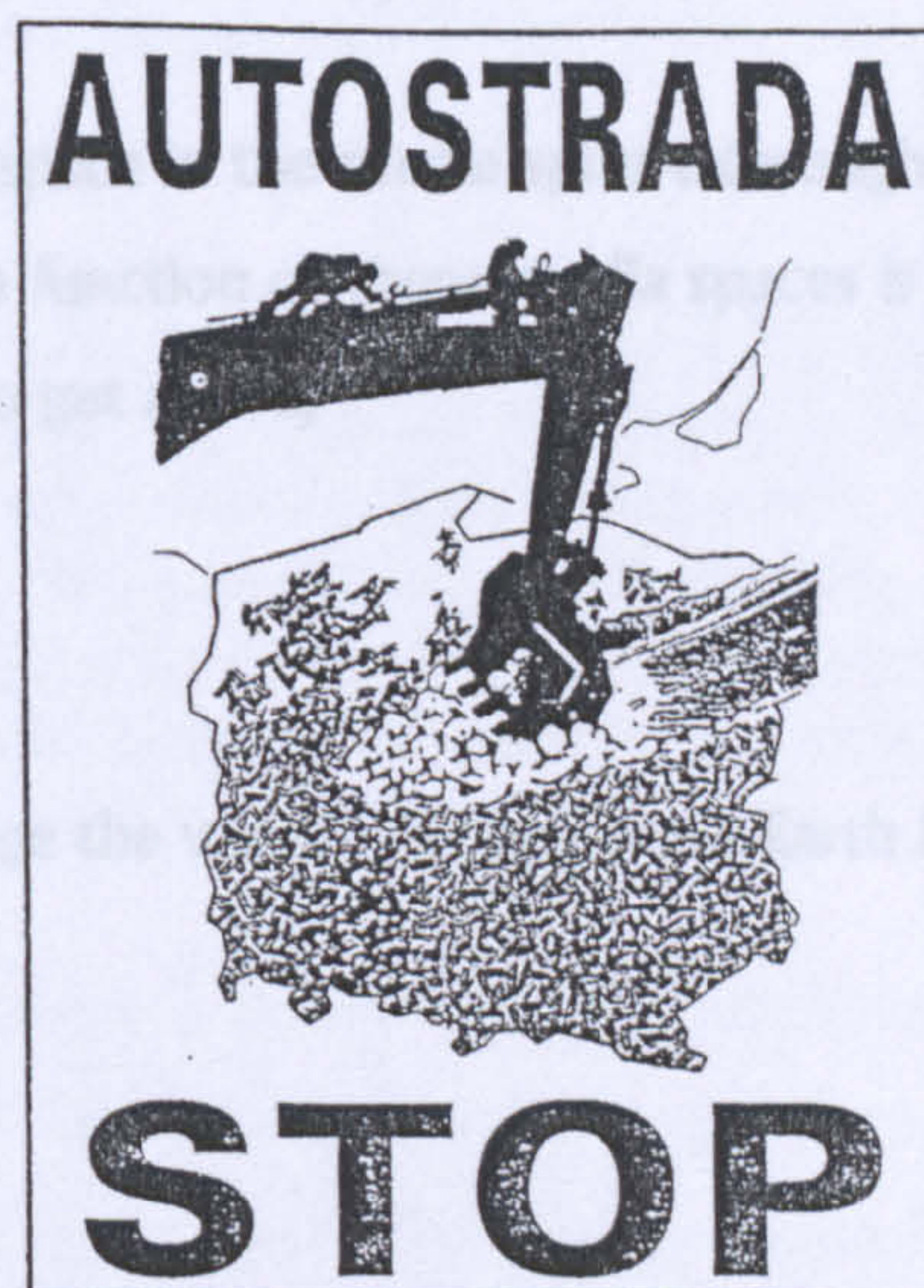


Figure 4:15. Images and postcards from Polish Earth First!

These alternative video zines bring many positive elements to broader EDA. Groups such as Conscious Cinema allow individual campaigns to have complete editorial control over their representation<sup>15</sup>. This opportunity leads to a diverse range of styles being adopted for films – complementing the broad range of avenues through which individuals have travelled to end up in direct action (see Chapter Five). Some films therefore have a resolute and hard-hitting political line, whereas some attempt to capture the viewers' imagination and emotion through the use of song, music and image. Most activist films therefore attempt to translate the first hand experience of protests, actions and demos, through the mediated process, into video film; or in the words of McIver, they attempt to, 'combine the ethics of activism [into] the aesthetics of television' (<http://ma.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/kids/ma.theory.1.3.db>). As such many films are successful in translating the good humour of EDA across to the audience. As O'Connor says, 'most of the people who involve themselves with Undercurrents come from [an EDA] background, and there's always been a strong sense of humour there. Natural humour, not scripted humour - real people not sound bites!' (in McKay, 1998:75). This combination of humour and real people puts a human face to an often complicated and boring political issue. The videos, as well as other alternative media formats, seek to tread the line between 'deadly dull politics' on one hand, and 'deadly irrelevant entertainment' on the other (after Pieter-Dirk Uys, a performer-activist, quoted in Squall, 1999:13). Or as a Squall

<sup>15</sup> The degree of freedom Undercurrents allow in practice is up for debate, as discussed in a later section.



writer describes;

'these persistent and well-populated enviropolitical stances mix music, theater, sculpture, craft and ingenuity with serious and urgent political consciousness. As a result, much of the dour laboriousness associated with politics dissolves in a potent concoction of imagination, celebration and dissent' (in McKay, 1998:77).

This section had illustrated that EDA-ers have taken space in the media sphere through the use of both newsprint as well as video footage. The main function of these media spaces is to invoke the empowerment necessary for individuals to get active;



'Do or Die's aims are:- To incite people to change the world' (Voices from Earth First, 1998:Idiotorial).



'Most of all, don't just read SchNEWS, get out there and get active!' (<http://www.schnew.org.uk>).

Through providing a space in which activists can disseminate information on EDA campaigns in an unmediated fashion, the alternative media also function in part as a 'public space'. This function allows activists to be informed about the existence and development of other campaigns, and highlights the complementarity of many of the apparently disparate struggles occurring across the country. As a result, alternative media spaces bring together many physical, as well as media, spaces into the combinatorial network of EDA. Many activists thus welcome the alternative media as it is seen to play an important role in the development of a community of EDA. The existence of a vibrant alternative media is argued to be an embodiment of what individuals can achieve when they work together in a common cause. This manifestation of EDA's 'do it yourself' credo can be seen to create a positive example for others wishing to get involved. As Merrick states, the existence of such positive examples is crucial to EDA development;

'As my friend Guy says, the real reason why so few people get involved in activist stuff is not apathy, but a complete lack of cultural references to even the *possibility* of activism. People get their options for their lives from role models and cultural symbols that they see every day, in both real life and depiction. The activist role models they see (Gandhi, Mandela, Martin Luther King, etc.) may be praised, but they're all 'saints', impossible to emulate and so ultimately disempowering. By writing our own stuff, we show the link from being a person tutting at the TV to being Mighty Tarzan Eco-Warrior, and so we make it *possible* for people to come and join us' (Merrick, 1997:6)<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Or, as Green Anarchist (1997:32) states; 'Monkeywrenching the media monoculture - all zines are important. Good, bad or indifferent, they give us a taste of the myriad bizarre obsessions and



It is argued therefore that the alternative media provides counter-cultural reference points for those sympathetic to environmental causes but find no empowering messages in mainstream society<sup>17</sup>. However, as the following quotation from an activist at Ashton Court implies, these alternative media outlets have initially been set up for those already active, rather than those at the fringes of activism, or part of the mainstream;

'SchNEWS, Action Update and West Country Activist that kind of thing is incredibly important because that's how you reach the activists, whereas the Evening Post and HTV, BBC News West type stuff reaches the people sitting in their living rooms. Although we have had visitors from the Evening Post [constituency], its a totally different audience. The sort of people who are going to come up and maybe break stuff [chortles] are not going to have read it in the Evening Post and gone, 'Oohh that looks like fun'' (Activist Interview, see Appendix V).

The orientation of the alternative media towards a generally 'active' constituency is one of the criticisms being directed towards these media spaces. Does the alternative media encourage new activists to get involved, or does it merely preach to the converted? After my research in the thirdspace this remains an open question. However, due to the limited mainstream distribution venues for alternative zines, at this stage in the development of EDA it is unlikely perhaps that many individuals (in)directly linked to environmental direct action even have knowledge about the existence of these zines.

#### The spaces of EDA - Conclusion.

This chapter has illustrated the ways in which EDA-ers have invoked a radical thirding of space in order to invoke alternative constructions and practices that complement their preferred cultural values. Activists have taken physical space in order to directly resist environmental destruction. These actions politicise spaces by embodying alternative cultural constructions about the environment. Through the movement of activists from site to site, these apparently disparate physical spaces become woven together into a combinatorial network of EDA. This weaving effect is given another dimension by the virtual spaces of EDA. Activists have established sites in cyberspace in order to publicise, co-ordinate and empower campaigns

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experiences out there, and of the multitude of voices (people like you and me) clamouring to be heard. Because of this, the primary value of zine culture lies in breaking the suffocating media monopoly, creating communication, and who knows... maybe even community'.

<sup>17</sup>It is argued that the alternative media functions in the same way as Scarce noted with reference to Abbey's The Monkey Wrench Gang in America; 'Rarely did [you] come upon a copy [of the book] in the late 70s that was not dog-eared from being passed from person to person and being read countless times. [As Mike Roselle remarks], 'You could discuss things with your friends after reading this book that for some reason you may not have discussed with them before, I noticed that when I was living in Wyoming, amongst our circle of friends when we found somebody who hadn't read the book, we'd say, 'Here! you gotta read this book!' They'd read it, and when we asked, 'What did you think?' they'd say, 'Aw, it was great! Let's go cut down a billboard'. It had that kind of effect' (1990: 241).



around the country, and across the globe. Rather than providing an alternative simulated community, this chapter has argued that activists use the Internet as another supporting mechanism to the physical spaces of EDA. In the mass media sphere, activists can be seen to be modestly successful in co-opting mainstream news culture to their own ends, and thus getting publicity to the general public. However, the dominance of this news culture should not be underestimated. Activists have found that any mainstream media support is likely to be transitory, superficial and recuperative in nature. As a consequence the physical and virtual spaces of EDA have been supported and strengthened by the establishment of a number of alternative video and newsprint zines that operate at a variety of geographical scales. These alternative media spaces integrate with the physical and virtual sites to enable EDA to 'feed itself' (after Vidal, in Brass & Poklewski Koziell, 1998), to give itself the oxygen of publicity to survive and grow. In this way, EDA has established the potential to spread its ethic of empowerment to ever growing numbers of people. This chapter has thus illustrated that the physical spaces of EDA do not occur in isolation. Action camps are not disparate sites but are located within broad networks of other physical, virtual and media spaces that combine together to create a community of EDA. The following chapters take this third space view of EDA further by examining the various environmental and political vocabularies used by EDA-ers in the multiple spaces of EDA (Chapter Five), as well as outlining what I view to be the defining characteristics of the culture of EDA (Chapter Six). An assessment of the fused, intertwined and 'entangled' nature of EDA's spatial practices will then occur in Chapter Seven.



**Chapter Five. The spaces of EDA & their vocabularies of environmentalism.**

As we have seen, Environmental Direct Activists 'take' and 'make' space. They actively subvert, adapt and inhabit different spaces in order to create 'autonomous zones' in which they can put into practice their own cultural preferences. Complementing the argument to date, this chapter posits that, from a third space perspective, the cultural values of EDA include a structure of power based on the autonomy of the individual, and the informal creation of combinatorial networks and communities involving both the human and non-human.

Specifically, Chapter Five explores the 'vocabularies' used by EDA-ers in order to invoke these cultural preferences. With direct reference to the multiple sites centred around Ashton Court, it will argue that there are four main vocabularies used by EDA-ers: the vocabulary of 'action'; broad ecological philosophies; stories, poems and myths; and the use of more rational environmental and political theory. The chapter comments particularly on the way in which the vocabulary of 'action' has been viewed by many activists and academics; it will be argued that this vocabulary has been viewed largely from a 'second space' perspective. This standpoint has resulted in the conclusion that activists *solely* articulate their cultural preferences through this language, that they privilege 'action' over its binary opposite 'thinking'. This chapter will go on to demonstrate that when a third space perspective is adopted this conclusion is illusory.

Activists can be seen to adopt three other vocabularies that are equally significant in empowering individuals and binding together the various spaces of EDA. The existence of these vocabularies raises questions regarding the nature of radical activism, and these issues, alongside the insights gained from the rest of this chapter, will contribute to a broad characterisation of the practice of EDA that is discussed in Chapter Six.

**EDA & the vocabulary of 'action'.**

**'Go out and do something. Pay your rent for the privilege of living on this beautiful, blue-green, living Earth' (Foreman, 1987:5).**

Through research in the third space, it was clear that the most visible vocabulary used by EDA-ers in order to invoke their cultural preferences was the vocabulary of 'action' i.e. through the practice of taking physical space. At the basic level, the practice of action is important to EDA-ers due to their perception of the nature of environmental destruction. On both a micro- and macro-scale, EDA-ers perceive that the democratic deficits experienced through the liberal democratic system have resulted in an increased magnitude and frequency of threats to the environment. In some EDA groups (especially in the United States) this has created an overtly apocalyptic edge to activists' beliefs (see Lee, 1995), and whilst in Britain 'millenarianism' is not so explicit, activists are under no illusions about the pressing nature of environmental



destruction<sup>1</sup>. As the following activist comments;

**'What good are Ideas that never get put into practice? What do they have to do before you'll do something? Where does your revolution start? There's 10 000 trees that they want to kill in the next six weeks, and they'll be really glad if you make it easy for them by staying at home having your war of Ideas. Ideas without action are called bullshit. If you can't walk it like you talk it, shut up till you learn how. But learn how' (Merrick, 1997:51).**

The pressing nature of environmental destruction at the site of Newbury bypass (above), or in the case of the meadow at Ashton Court, meant that if individuals wanted to do something to resist this destruction the only option remaining was to 'take' place in order to prevent it. The adoption of practical action thus may have been forced upon EDA-ers due to the immanence of eco-destruction. However, this practice has developed into a celebrated characteristic of EDA for other reasons too.

**'Even though people don't have faith in the political process, and they know how corrupt big business is, they don't see any way around this. This is the biggest triumph that the people who keep us in check have got over us. That most people don't think that they can change their world' (Oll, 1998).**

Through the taking of place, it was clear that the activists were not only successful in attempting to prevent eco-destruction, but as the above quotation indicates, many were also empowered through this practice. Prior to involvement in EDA, individuals perhaps suffered from feelings of apathy, or a lack of cultural references regarding the possibility of activism (as noted in Chapter Four). However, the practice of taking place radically altered these feelings. Activists realised that they could make some form of difference to the environmental debate, and could become role models themselves. As the following quotations illustrate<sup>2</sup>;

**'The M3 [EDA] campaign has transformed my cynicism and apathy into a positive belief that a sustainable and sane future for the environment is truly in the hands of all of us individuals' (Andy, One World Support UK, 1994).**

I watched 'comic relief' later this evening - get a good buzz. v. similar to the buzz from being on site. feel like youre making a difference - that you're life has meaning (not maybe as big as that. that your action, your day, has meaning). Not just sitting around doing empty things with no meaning. (this is real, is not a feeling cos im doing fieldwork and its a buzz from getting field work done, cos im not looking at it that way most of the time, and anyway, its only thru thinking about it that

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<sup>1</sup> As Chapter Four noted, activists do not define specific cases of environmental destruction in isolation; they consider them to be part of a wider 'war' of eco-destruction. For example, the case of Ashton Court was not simply the destruction of Top Park Field, it was part of the battle which has seen 97% of the wild flower meadows in Britain destroyed since 1945, as well as part of the regional battle against quarry expansion in rural areas, etcetera. These are just two examples of the local is global perception of environmental destruction (<http://www.joolz.demon.co.uk>).

<sup>2</sup> This chapter will again use the outlined typesets for 'diary' and 'virtual' sourced information.



you get stuff for fieldwork, need that reflection, which is post-event, rather than AT the time, so the buzz you get is AT THE TIME, or immediately afterwards, ie as your going home, the fieldwork buzz arrives in the reflection.)

anyway, it feels like youre doing something that counts. To who? to yourself? yes, to a degree. To someone else? Yes to a degree too. Made something out of nothing, made something better, something small maybe, but it had a cause and effect, it had a consequence - maybe just to be a nuisance, but it had a tangible effect there and then. Made security go crazy, cost Pioneer money. made us feel good. was a laugh. had created something that before didnt exist.

Uplifting. Gives you degrees of hope that watching telly all Sunday would not normally have done' (Appendix I:8)

Activists at Ashton Court also expressed the experience of gaining power through practice, as a participant in the day-action at Mearhead Quarry in Devon (which coincided with a visit from the quarry owner) articulates;

'You *never* get the opportunity to get to the person who MOST benefits from it [environmental destruction] and is most directly doing it... so it was really, well, empowering, that is the right word for it, cos we walked right in and closed it [the quarry] down, and they were going like 'oh shit we cant do anything, there's too many of them, they've closed us down!' Well, okay, in the long term it might not have achieved much, but just for that morning they couldn't blast any more rock out of the earth - there is a long term battle and a short term battle; maybe, *maybe*, we cant actually stop them from destroying this meadow, but then I don't think the council are going to lease off any more of Ashton Court, they are not going to be able to extend this quarry any further, I'm sure of that, and that's a victory, cos next they'll be wanting this bit [the rest of top field], they'll be wanting a bit of the woods...so I think it does work...and that's why I feel that I've got to do something and it might not be completely effective but its the only thing I can do' (Activist Interview, see Appendix V).

'John: After th[e protest] I thought, 'That felt good. I want to do some more of this...' (Evans, 1998:30)

Due to the empowering nature of EDA, it became apparent that 'action' itself developed into an additional motivating factor for EDA: The 'buzz' created through 'taking place' itself motivated and engendered further commitment to protest activity. This 'buzz' was useful in attracting individuals who were not perhaps initially motivated by 'environmental' concerns, but by the more sociable aspects of EDA spaces;

'All different types of people would come down. You'd get alot of nutters, but there was a complete mixture... What I loved was that loads of people had gone there for the so-called 'Wrong Reasons', not political, not trying to save anything; they were there to meet friends or girlfriends, for social reasons maybe, whatever, but they'd end up being active. They'd end up climbing up stuff and chaining themselves to it, trying to do their bit...' (Jelly, in Evans, 1998:40).

'For Nad and Baz, Ashton Court is the first site they've been to where they have been personally aware of the specific 'politics' involved in



it, i.e. the mechanics of why the meadow is being destroyed. Before they've just had a general sense of what was going on - they were there because it was a 'laugh'. But at AC they seem to be more connected: like Gav says, 'you either have a meadow or a hole in the ground, and I don't want it to be a hole in the ground' (Appendix I:20)

Whether individuals became involved in EDA due to 'environmental' or 'recreational' reasons appeared to make little difference to their acceptance on site<sup>3</sup>. The attraction of a new individual to 'action' was perceived pragmatically to be a major success for the campaign, and through their participation, it was presumed likely that newcomers would be seduced into environmental commitment by their engagement with EDA. This was due primarily to the specific nature of life in a physical space of EDA.

**'Camps can be great, dynamic, exciting, anarchic communities, examples of low-impact earth-centred living, where people live and struggle together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and solidarity' (Voices from Earth First, 1998:155).**

The physical spaces of EDA appear to seduce newcomers not simply due to the empowerment gained through action. Visiting or living in a physical space of EDA involves a close engagement with the environment under threat. This lifestyle is perhaps akin to reinhabiting the land (after Snyder, 1995); individuals become more reliant and dependent upon the vagaries of weather, temperature, the fruits of the earth and the resources available. This reinhabitation thus promotes individuals to engage with the environment, a process that is becoming less and less necessary in the mediated modern world. For some, this re-engagement engenders feelings of identification and connection with the non-human world; as the following comments suggest,

**'[Route Walks] help everyone build up a relationship with the land they are campaigning for and show exactly where the road is going, especially before work starts. Bill them as fairly neutral so that fence-sitters can find out more and won't feel as if they are just political rallies. *Once they see the land they will know what side of the fence they are on*' (Road Alert!, 1997:54)**

'Julia said today that she has a 'feeling' for trees, for woods...she says 'everything is different in the woods'' (Appendix I:6)

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<sup>3</sup> Many of those at Ashton Court originally got involved due to acquaintances with whom they wished to spend some time. Through these acquaintances, a stronger commitment to activism evolved;

'Nad and Baz were at Dead Womans Bottom and Selar in Wales prior to this - the same goes for Bee and Jim - and prior to that they were at Manchester. They went to Manchester cos of a bloke called 'Sooty' who they met in a club in Sheffield - at the time they were just doing drugs and partying and decided to go up there, and have been active ever since...' (Appendix I:8)

'Neil was a 'carer' in Birmingham - here to forget about 'caree' who died very recently. He came here because he knew Bee as a teenager - used to live here in Bristol together' (Appendix I: 3)

'... the only reason I [got involved] was because I fell off my bike in Leigh Woods and was on crutches and so I couldn't go canoeing & biking which is what I normally do every weekend. Instead I went to a MAI demo [in Broadmead, Bristol] and people there said, 'come to the gathering (it was the next week) it will be a good laugh'. so I went...within a week of deciding I'd like to get involved in direct action. I was helping to set up the camp and I've been there ever since' (Activist Interview, see Appendix V).



'I quite enjoy it [at Ashton Court], Its a bit like being at dave's house when we were kids... I get a slowed down, rhythmic feeling in the woods and on the meadow, relaxed (Appendix I:2)

I go for a walk. The rain's stopped and everything is lush and green. AC is gorgeous. See deer (with antlers) a crushed eggshell - hear baby birds too. walking down through and down from deer park is lovely (Appendix I:18)

I wasn't that cold 'cos I was busy - the sun was setting beautifully over the quarry and coming home the top way was lovely. Green lush English trees

bloody gorgeous - sun SKY! bristol trees - have to take photos of these just for me. For me not for work, mostly indistinguishable I know, but never mind (Appendix I:19).

**The process of visiting and inhabiting a physical space of EDA thus establishes a connection with the environment. This connection is strengthened when the specific threat to the piece of land is actualised.**

Went to Clevedon - we passed wood and quarry on the way back. I felt really angry and upset at the same time. Akin to being truly shaken by bad news. The place 'knows' bad things are going to happen. The atmosphere up there is quite affecting. Have to make it better for it somehow. (Appendix I:31)

**In many cases, the strength of connection with the environment under threat became inversely proportional to the respect shown for the forces perceived to be responsible for its destruction. At Ashton Court the animosity towards Pioneer, and specifically Alaska Environmental (the contractors employed to translocate the meadow) was palpable<sup>4</sup>. This animosity prompted a variety of actions to prevent further destruction, as well as to cost the respective corporations money (the characteristics of these actions will be discussed in detail in Chapter Six). Thus connection with the environment through the inhabitation of EDA space led to a concurrent radicalisation at the level of the individual, as one activist states;**

**'Living on site is a very intense experience, your entire life and identity become bound up with a particular piece of land and what you can do to defend it. There are good things that can come out of this; passion and commitment to your activism, as well as the radicalisation that occurs when something directly relevant to your life is destroyed by business and the state, protected as ever by the police' (Voices from Earth First, 1998:155)..**

**Inhabiting a physical space of EDA also engenders strong connections with the other individuals with whom the space is shared. Due to the disparate social, vocational and geographical origins**

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<sup>4</sup>Alaska Environmental workers raised the ire of activists not just because they were translocating the meadow, but because they were doing so in a way that openly flouted all the agreed safety and environmental regulations for the process (see Appendix VII).



of individuals, these relationships are ones that are unlikely to have been created in mainstream society; and unlike many of these latter relationships, those formed on site become deep-rooted, even over a short space of time. I experienced this through my time at Ashton Court;

After the security guard attack last night, me and bee had a 'moment' today when we really respected one another. She did something that she really didnt want to do cos security had shaken her up so much last night, but she did it. And ditto for me, and in what other circumstance would we two people get together and understand each other so fully? We did it for the good of everyone, and so when you have a common enemy, even the people you have apparently little in common with you're just brought together (Appendix I:22)

**'Living on a protest camp is a unique experience, it is completely divorced from the reality of British society - preconcieved ideas and perceptions are altered drastically. A bonding grows between people that I personally have never experienced elsewhere. I can liken it to that of family relationships - what you go through with each other in such a short period of time is enriching, you are continuously evolving, learning new things about life that no education system could teach you in a hundred years' (Voices from Earth First, 1988:10).**

As I experienced through my acceptance at Ashton Court, the physical spaces of EDA are also seductive to new activists because they are relatively easy to become a part of. Newcomers need only portray a willingness to be active in the everyday practices of life on site and they will become quickly involved<sup>5</sup>. As the following examples illustrate;

anne speaks of her apprehension when she first came up here: she felt as if she wouldn't belong etc; But then, after only half an hour or so, she could sense the 'community' feel of it [her words]. she felt as if she was with like-minded people. She wouldnt have come in if it wasn't for the 'free tea' poster - a sort of non-committal arrival. I say I didnt even get that far first time (Appendix I:24)

anne came again today, she said she feels connected to the camp. anne changing from visitor to regular - its odd watching the change in someone else, how ashton court becomes the central thing in your life, esp. after its happened to you, and you yourself have now become integral in facilitating someone elses change (Appendix I:24)

muriel: comes up here because she doesn't get on with her student friends in the city, but she feels at home up here (Appendix I:19)

**'having a semi-permanent centre of activity... allows people new to the movement to become more involved quicker. It can take months to gain acceptance in an Earth First! group but, provided you muck in, only a matter of days at a protest site' (Do or Die, 1999:15).**

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<sup>5</sup>At Craggy Island, the presence of new local individuals was welcome as they gave invaluable moral support to existing activists, embodying the support from many in Bristol. As newcomers' visits became more regular, and merged into full time habitation in many cases, this moral support was supplemented by practical actions such as food provision, local advice, defence building, etcetera.



However, the ease of transition into the practice of EDA is not wholly related to the willingness of newcomers to be 'active'. Through my experience in the third space it seemed that the size of site, and the proximity to eviction, also influenced the ease of transition. For many months at Ashton Court, life was relatively peaceful and relaxing (see Figure 5:1). In these periods, many newcomers to site found it to be a very welcoming and attractive place to be. There were approximately 12-20 people living in two sites, so everyone knew everyone else relatively quickly, and this helped to create a cohesive community. During the weeks leading up to eviction however, life became frenetic. It appeared that due to the necessity to get things done quickly and effectively, many activists who had been on site for a while congregated together in 'cells'. It seemed to me that there was little time to ease newcomers into 'action' during this period. As a result, those who came to site for the first time during these periods experienced a very different environment than at any other time<sup>6</sup>.

Figure 5:1. 'The brave eco-warrior' (Evans, 1998:82).



<sup>6</sup>One activist who passed through Ashton Court on a number of occasions felt the site to be far friendlier than her experience at larger camps. At Fairmile, for example, this activist had been there for about a week before she had felt 'part' of those camps.



The practising of action, of making spaces of EDA, thus becomes seductive to activists for a variety of reasons. It creates and builds upon connections with the non-human environment, as well as forging human relationships that are often intense and deeply felt. The ethos of 'power through practice' thus acts to create communities of EDA that are characterised by relations with the human and non-human worlds. The experience of visiting, or inhabiting, these spaces integrate many into EDA as its power ethos enlivens individuals' 'spirit'. Through practising action it seems those protesters' personal 'spirit' is re-fuelled due to the positive, sociable, and empowering aspects of protest. My experience indeed highlighted to me that 'doing' action reconnected my daily existence with senses of vitality – in the words of Dillard (1973:67), 'The[se] brave acts, chances taken and passages won, make you feel loud as a child'. Or, as the following activists state;

Bee [on pissing in a bottle in her bender in the snow first thing in the morning] 'But its life affirming. its real' (Appendix I:17)

'Alice: The best thing about Trollheim, and Fairmile and Allercombe was that the camps lasted for so long. The fact that we were there for two years, squatting Department of Transport land and having a right good laugh, doing whatever we bloody well felt like, I think is much more Up Yours and making much more of a statement. Day to day living a life of resistance...' (In Evans, 1988:36)

EDA makes you feel, 'alive to the aliveness of life' (activist in Seel, 1997:10).

Despite the benefits that can be created through establishing spaces of EDA, a number of problems can also be identified. In some cases, the strong affiliation created with the specific space of EDA (or the Temporary Autonomous Zone, or TAZ, after Bey, [http://www.hermetic.com/bey/taz\\_cont.html](http://www.hermetic.com/bey/taz_cont.html)) leads to a tension between the continued existence of this TAZ and the broader goals of the campaign as a whole. As one activist at the West Country Activist gathering stated, 'camps are becoming increasingly limiting because they become hostages to action' (Appendix I:19). At Ashton Court, activists did indeed become hostages to Craggy Island and Bulgaria. Activists had become so seduced by the positive aspects of the camps that all resources were oriented to their continued existence. As a result, other actions, such as the targeting of Pioneer and Alaska Environmental headquarters, or rallying support in Bristol, could not be maximised<sup>7</sup>. The seductive nature of the physical spaces of EDA can thus be seen to concentrate activist's resources and energy, which in some cases may lead to tensions with the broader aspects of environmental campaigns.

As a consequence of the preoccupation with action in the physical spaces of EDA, many of the commentaries on EDA describe it as being solely characterised by this action, rather than involving forms of theorisation or reflection. Some of my responses from the virtual

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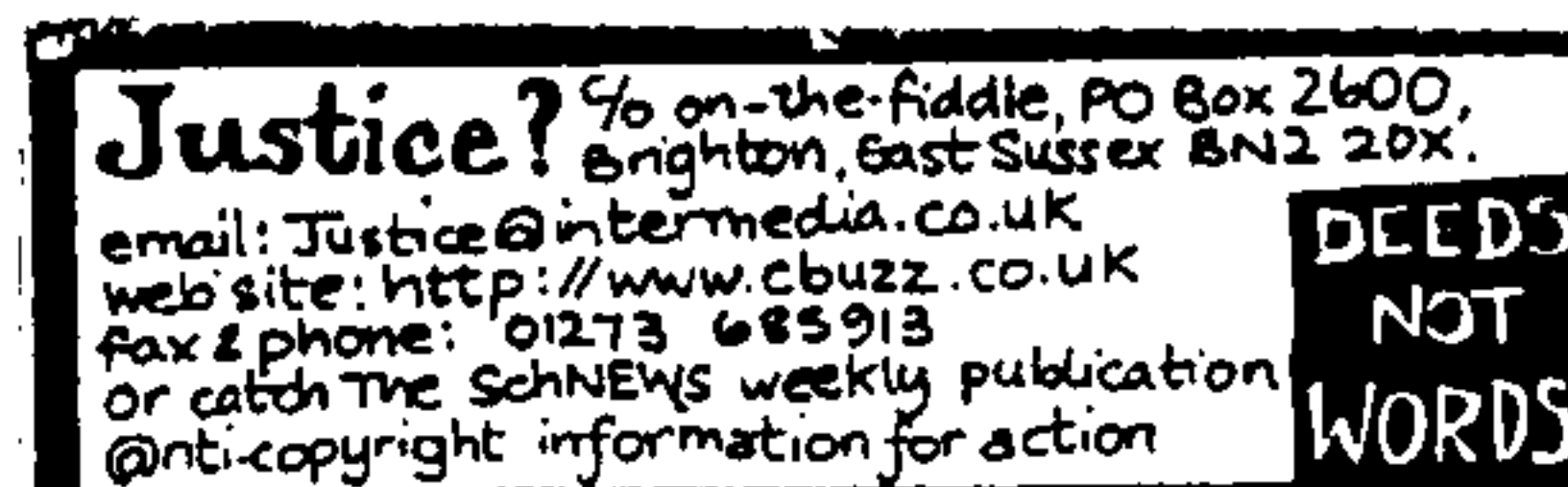
<sup>7</sup>As one activist puts it: 'camps demand loyalty from those who defend them, spending time or resources on more offensive tactics (office occupations, site invasions, sabotage) can be seen as abandoning the camp, almost to the point of treason' (Do or Die 1999:155).



questionnaire imply this point (see Chapter Three), but similar statements have been made by a number of other activists;

**'a single act of defiance is worth a thousand angry words' (SchNEWSround, 1997:2)**

**'Actions speak louder than words' (SchNEWSAnnual, 1998:3)**



as well as a number of non-activist commentators;

**'there is a problem for a movement that declares itself to be heterogeneous but has no room for thinkers in it' (Grant, 1995:21)**

**'activists are anti-discursiveness and anti-intellectualism... action means movement, spectacle, confrontation; what it doesn't mean is reflection, history, theory' (McKay, 1998:12).**

Such conclusions are made not simply because these commentators focus predominantly on the physical spaces of EDA<sup>8</sup>, but because they can be seen to originate from a binary 'Second space' cognitive epistemology (after Soja, 1996). Both academics and activists who comment on EDA view a polar distinction between 'thinking' and 'doing', or 'theory' and 'action'. Due perhaps to activists' wish to emphasise their difference to modernity, they privilege the 'active' aspects of their environmentalism (which visibly and clearly invoke counter-hegemonic practices) and criticise those who do not participate in a similar way. (In this respect, activists can be seen to be anti-modern; they have reversed the cognitive conceptualisation of 'thought-then-action' to privilege action rather than thought). Academics, however, can be seen to have retained the modern dichotomy and criticise activists for failing to rationally think through their practice. From this perspective, both academics and activists have little option but to conceptualise EDA-ers as 'pro-doing' and 'anti-thinking' (and by inference, academics as 'pro-thinking, anti-doing'). However, if EDA is viewed from the perspective of the thirdspace epistemology, this conclusion is illusory. It is clear that activists do engage with intellectual and discursive debates, but perhaps not on conventionally cognitive and political levels (in other words, the forms of expression used do not complement the cognitive thought-then-action conception; they are (con)fused: thinking is in action, and action is in thinking). If EDA is viewed through the lens of thirdspace, and is conceived of in terms of multiple inter-linked spaces, it is clearly identifiable that some activists do spend a large amount of their time writing, deliberating and theorising their experience. The next sections of this chapter will

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<sup>8</sup> Although 'thinking' practices are rendered less visible in the physical spaces of EDA due to the everyday pressures of living in a frontline TAZ.



provide evidence for this statement, focusing on the 'words' used by activists to support, justify and explain their 'deeds'. The complementarity between the multifarious emotions and ethics expressed by activists, and the philosophies of 'deep', 'transpersonal' and 'social' ecology will be focused on the next section. The chapter then moves on to an examination of how and why mythologies, poetry and stories are utilised as a means of expression by activists. The final section will examine the more conventionally rational and cognitive political theories used by activists to intellectually ground their practice.

#### EDA & the vocabulary of ecological theory.

'...you come out here and you meet all these different people, and most people are probably anarchists, and then you get some socialists, and there are all these words with '-ist' on the end. And I thought I'd better start reading all these books and see what best describes me..., 'cos I like to know what I'm arguing about, and not just turn up and camp and go, 'oh its shit, they're digging a quarry', I wanted to know about all the issues and about this that and the other...' (Activist Interview, see Appendix V).

'I continued to develop a spiritual awareness- my own brand of Jungian archetypal symbolism and paganism' (Plows, 1998).

Through experience in the third space it became clear that many activists attempted to develop some sort of philosophy in regard to their action; in the words of Stanley, they tried to, 'theorise their own experience' (1991:208). In many cases the philosophies and theories created were amalgams that complemented each activist's own individual preferences (for example, 'anarcho-punk-pagan'). The myriad of philosophies associated with EDA I thus found to be pluralistic and eclectic in nature, ranging from those associated with mysticism and shamanism, to academically renowned environmental ethics (a number of Max Oeschlager texts were present at Craggy Island). Although no one monolithic philosophy can be attributed to EDA, I have found it useful to think of the many positions adopted as complementing or reflecting 'ecocentric' perspectives. Through harnessing the multiplicity of voices inherent within the third space, this section will outline the main characteristics of 'ecocentric' thought, and go on to compare how activists' views of the environment, and their relationship with it, complement these characteristics.

'The central insight...of the science of ecology was the realization that all things are connected, are related; that human beings are merely one of the millions of species that have been shaped by the process of evolution for three and a half billion years' (<http://www.envirolink.org/orgs/ef/>).

For many EDA-ers, philosophies related to 'ecocentrism' resonate strongly with their innate perceptions of themselves and the non-human world. Ecocentrism, as its prefix 'eco' suggests, has at its root the science of *ecology*. This science informs the perception of the natural world



and humanity's place therein. There are many comprehensive texts on the basic rubric of ecology, but for our purposes Commoner's 'laws of ecology' will suffice to stylise the ecological debate:

'Commoner's 'Laws of Ecology':

- 1: Everything is connected to everything else
- 2: Everything must go somewhere
- 3: Nature knows best
- 4: There is no such thing as a free lunch' (from Croal, 1981:12).

These laws of ecology serve to outmode and transcend the root ontological divide created (in part) by the processes of atomisation and specialisation introduced by renaissance science (see Chapter Two). Ecology's ground rules compare favourably with the holistic approach to the world that characterised pre-Enlightenment thought. Ecology thus informs us that there is no genuine division in reality between human and non-human species. The prefix 'eco' (from *oikos*, the greek for 'home'), inherently suggests that the planet is the native habitat for all living species, and the 'laws' dictate that all these species exist in a closed 'web' of connectivity. Due to ecology's holistic configuration of reality, ecocentrism perceives that humanity itself is not the most valuable entity in the biosphere (i.e. it does not hold an anthropocentric vision of reality), rather it prioritises the process of ecological evolution itself. This is a perspective held by many EDA-ers, as Earth First!er Chris Manes suggests,

'Evolution means there is no basis for seeing humans as more advanced (or valuable) than any other species. Homo Sapiens is not the goal of evolution, for as near as we can tell evolution has no telos, it simply unfolds, life-form after life-form' (in Gottlieb, 1991:545).

The foundations upon which the ecocentric world view are built therefore correspond to the scientific rigour of ecology. However to understand ecocentrism fully, we must look a little deeper into its tenets, beyond the realm of purely scientific investigation, as the following suggests;

'Ecology is sometimes characterised as the study of a natural 'web of life'. But the image of a web is too meagre and simple for the reality. A web is flat and finished and has the mortal frailty of the individual spider. Although elastic, it has insufficient depth. However solid to the touch of the spider, for us it fails to denote the *oikos* - the habitation - and to suggest the enduring integration of the primitive Greek domicile with its sacred hearth, bonding the earth to all aspects of society' (Shephard, in Dirsch 1970:56).

As we have seen, ecocentrism views humanity as just another species that is limited and constrained by the concepts underlying the science of ecology. These universal, yet abstract, laws of the human condition find resonance at the level of the individual through a deeper 're-feeling' of this reality. As the section on the vocabulary of 'action' noted, many EDA-ers



develop a strong feeling for the environment that goes beyond any economic or instrumental attachment. A number of theorisations attempt to express these feelings, and aid our understanding of EDA; they include 'deep', 'transpersonal' and 'social' ecology.

'How deep is your ecology?'  
(<http://www.envirolink.org/orgs/ef/>)

'I developed an environmental and political awareness through studying very orthodox economic and political ways of doing things. I then came across Zakin, Paul Watson, and Deep Ecology and these reflected the way I really felt about things' (Activist conversation, see Appendix I:25).

From basic but universal ecological insights, the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess has attempted to explain the depth of feeling some individuals have for the environment. Naess has done this through articulating two 'ultimate norms' of this 'deepened' or 'deep ecology' - Biocentric Equality and Self-realisation (1989). The principle of Biocentric Equality emanates from the view that humanity is just one part of the ecosystemic 'web'. Following from this, all natural things - be they sentient beings, ecosystems, or landscapes - are equally valuable entities. This equality of value within the biosphere is based not on the usefulness or instrumental value that certain entities may have for humanity (or any other species) but is based on the intrinsic value of the entity itself. This principle is echoed by many EDA-ers, as one group expresses it,

'All natural things have intrinsic value, inherent worth. Their value is not determined by what they will ring up on the cash register, nor by whether or not they are good. They are. They exist. For their own sake. Without consideration for any real or imagined value to human civilization'  
(<http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/EF/pubs/aulat.html>).

This belief in Biocentric Equality thus defines many EDA-ers motives for action, as the following group suggests;

'Earth First! means putting life first. Ecology... tells us that the earth is one living organism, and that humanity is as much a part of it as any other species. It is a belief in biocentrism, that the Earth and all the [species] inhabiting her come first, and a practice of putting our beliefs into action' ((<http://www.envirolink.org/orgs/ef/>)).

The fundamental reconfiguration of the human condition that ecocentrism encourages is described by Naess as the second key tenet of deep ecological thinking - Self Realisation: the realisation of self (ego) in Self (the wider relational community). This tenet, according to Gary Snyder, is the 'real work' involved in developing an ecological consciousness (1995). Once individuals can conceive of themselves as truly part of a wider biospheric community, the notion of self-interest is reconfigured, as too is the notion of 'environment', as all existing



entities become part of one transcendent 'I'<sup>9</sup>. Warwick Fox's theorisation of this ecological consciousness is also useful to our understanding of EDA (especially since many EDA-ers refer to his work, for example);

*Was there any particular event or circumstance that prompted you to get involved in environmental action?*

A mentor introduced me to the concepts of radical environmentalism and deep ecology. I read everything I could get my hands on about it. Arne Naess' "Ecology, Community and Lifestyle" had a big impact on me, also Warwick Fox's books. What most influenced me, however, was being in nature.

From respondant2@email.address Thu Feb 12 05:03:42 1998

Fox (1995) explains humans' multi-layered attachment to the non-human world through a process he calls 'identification'. According to Fox, the process of identification involves the enlargement of our own sense of 'self'-hood. Fox offers three constituents as the bases of identification: *Personal*, *Ontological* and *Cosmological*. The first, the *Personal*, occurs through direct involvement with certain entities; as Fox suggests these include,

'our family, our friends and distance relations, our pets, our homes, our teddy bear or doll. Our football or basketball club, the individual members of which may change from year to year; our country. We experience these entities as part of 'us', as part of our identity' (Fox, in Gottlieb, 1991:414).

This form of identification can clearly be understood by most humans, even those espousing anthropocentric cosmologies. The attachment individuals feel towards close family members, their soul-mates, or their country strikes at the very core of many people's identity. The section on the vocabulary of action has noted the strong 'family' relations generated between EDA-ers through living in a physical space of EDA, and many EDA-ers also feel part of their environmental attachment derives from a feeling of being patriotic - that the environment symbolises their national identity, as the following quotations from Newbury suggest;

'The protest has become one about national identity - building the bypass 'hits [at] everything that could represent the spirit of Englishness' (Nick),  
'Its the land, this land. Nationalism's crap, but everything that makes a place unique is important' (Theo), (in Griffiths & Vidal, 1996:23).

The second and third bases of identification, the *ontological* and *cosmological* are, in contrast, not concerned with entities with which we have direct personal contact. It is here that

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<sup>9</sup>One way humans can re-feel their reality is through conceiving their body, not as a hard boundary, but as a 'soft zone' contacting the world instead of excluding it. Paul Shephard expresses this point nicely (in Disch, 1970); 'The epidermis of the skin is ecologically like a pond surface or a forest soil, not a shell so much as a delicate interpenetration. It reveals itself enobled and extended rather than threatened as part of the landscape and ecosystem, because the beauty and complexity of nature are continuous with ourselves'.



Identification diverges from traditional, perhaps intellectually clear, analysis, and delves 'deeper' into the realms of ecological consciousness. The ontological form of identification is based on the idea that 'things are', that they exist. As Fox explains, in this form of identification,

**'the environment' is experienced not as a mere backdrop against which our privileged egos and those entities with which we are most concerned play themselves out, but rather as just as much an expression of the manifesting of Being (i.e. of existence per se) as we ourselves are' (In Gottlieb, 1991:415).**

I read this form of identification as that which individuals may feel when they think of specific environments in which key events occurred in their life. For example, individuals may identify with their childhood garden, their school-yard or their first house, and, since these specific environments influenced in some way that individual's personal experience, become inseparable from that person's identity. The section on the vocabulary of action noted how EDA-ers develop an attachment to the specific environment that they are attempting to protect, and how this attachment influences their identity. Many locals at Ashton Court also felt a strong affinity to the meadow due to its place in their recreational, and perhaps even spiritual, lives.

A local lady visits again today, she says she's walked her dog up here for years. It means a lot to her because she said she senses the 'Green Man' lives up here, her friends do too, and they bike up here a lot. We talk about how the concept of time feels different up here, at many different depths - intraday - days like decades, interday, seasons, years / geological time. The relationship with the land is like that with a person, it can function on a bodily, mental and spiritual plane (Appendix I:35)

Similar feelings have also been expressed at many other EDA spaces around the country;

**'When I was seven, my mother taught me the names of all the trees I climbed in the Great Pen Wood. I caught minnows in the River Enbourn... I kissed my first boyfriend when I was 14 on Snelmore Common and 4 years later I lost my virginity in the Chase. My place of clearwater, my place of learning, is being razed by a process that calls itself a democracy' (In Griffiths & Vidal, 1996:23).**

When associated with particular elements of an environment, for example specific trees, or a meadow, this process of identification becomes more perceptible. It is common for individuals to attribute human qualities to trees, calling them 'grumpy', or 'anxious', or sensing when they were 'pissed off' (In this case it was a 'Granny' Ash);

**'Brette, who defected to the protesters' side last week, said he was 'upset' when he saw three big trees cut down, and the protesters were in tears: 'It gets to you, seeing the trees cut down'. Graham, another defecting security guard, agreed: 'I saw a couple of big trees being cut down, That triggered something within me' (Griffiths, 1996:14).**



Many activists at Ashton Court also articulated their strong identification with the meadow under threat, as the following diary extract exemplifies;

Whilst the big Beltane fire got going, scott said nancy felt that the earth was anxious. they promised to help save it - you can sense that the 'vibe' from the land is not good, there is a peculiar feeling in the air. This 'anxiety' reminds me of chris gillham comparing twyford down to an ill friend, and the importance of continuing to support it - 'if someone we love is terminally ill, that is no reason to walk away'... (Appendix I:31)

Fox explains the third basis of identification, the cosmological, through the use of a tree analogy. The cosmological, he states,

'leads us to identify ourselves more and more with the entire tree rather than just with our leaf (our personal, biographical self), the leaves on our twig (our family), the leaves we are in close proximity to on other twigs (our friends), the leaves on our minor sub-branch (our community), the leaves on our major sub-branch (our species), and so on. At the limit, cosmologically based identification, like ontologically based identification, therefore leads to impartial identification with all particulars (all leaves on the tree)' (in Gottlieb, 1991:417).

This form of identification is thus not limited to environments that individuals may have close affinity with (for example, local or national environments), but with the environment in general. Such identification moves individuals to campaign for environments that they may not even have visited or know much about - except for the fact that it exists. Examples of this form of identification can be seen in the many international campaigns waged and publicised through the alternative media, (see Voices from Earth First, 1996, 1997, 1998, or any SchNEWS edition, (<http://www.schnews.org.uk>)). This form of identification helps to link EDA spaces together as they allow the discrete individual to envision themselves as part of a wider human and non-human community. Fox suggests that such development of an ecological consciousness ought to be described as 'transpersonal ecology' (rather than as, say, 'deep ecology') as this makes explicit the transcendence of the egoistic by the relational self. This was expressed at Ashton Court in the following way:

when we return to Craggy Island people are stripping naked and jumping over the fire (its beltane eve) what a sight! watch those flying embers! fire pit is *full* of people - fiddles, guitars, accordians, witches. Bee shouted out that I should strip too - I gave the traditional finger reply. Much drank, and many songs played and sung... Lyrics: 'someone told us / we own the land / but the one thing I've learned is / *we are the land / and the land is us*' (Appendix 1:36)



*I don't think you can talk about environmental concerns without talking about social issues as well- so housing ,cctv, police harassment, organic farming V agribusiness also the media and the reporting of these issues (emphasis added).*

From respondent10@email.address Fri Feb 6 18:48:34 1998

Another version of 'ecology' that sheds light on EDA is the notion of 'Social Ecology'. Social Ecology differs subtly from the other 'ecologies' outlined as it makes a specific case against the notion of 'hierarchy' in both the human and non-human realms. As Dobson (1991:59) explains, 'the most fundamental form of exploitation is not that of the environment by human beings, but of human beings by human beings. As long as hierarchy in human society exists so the projects of dominating nature will continue'. Bookchin, the main protagonist of social ecology, puts it this way,

*'ecology, in my view, has always meant social ecology: the conviction that the very concept of dominating nature stems from the domination of human by human...of society by the state, of the individual by bureaucracy, as or a colonised people by a colonial power. To my thinking, social ecology has to begin its quest for freedom not only in the factory but also in the family, not only in the economy but also in the psyche, not only in the material conditions of life but also in the spiritual ones' (ibid:60).*

Social Ecology's grounding in the exploitative tendencies in society marks Bookchin's wish to distinguish this notion from the 'eco-lala' tendencies of 'deep' and 'transpersonal' ecology. He states,

*'Social Ecology is neither 'deep', 'tall', 'fat', nor 'thick'. It is social. It does not fall back on incantations, sutras, flow diagrams or spiritual vagaries. It is avowedly *rational*. It does not try to regale metaphorical forms of spiritual mechanism and crude biologism with Taoist, Buddhist, Christian or shamanistic eco-lala. It is a coherent form of naturalism that looks to the evolution and biosphere, not to deities in the sky or under the earth, for quasi-religious and supernaturalistic explanations of natural and social phenomena' (in Porritt, 1988:63).*

This form of ecology is perhaps most closely aligned with the disposition of the majority of EDA-ers in this country, as one activist states;

*'I may be accused of over-simplifying here, but the basic philosophy [of deep ecology] separates environmental from social issues and gives absolute rights to the former. This is what differentiates British EF! from American EF!. The British protest movement identifies the interdependence of social / human rights, and accords them equal value. People, as part of nature, have the right to be free from exploitation and oppression, too. British EF!'s strategies and philosophies...have more in common with the 'social ecology' perspective championed by Murray Bookchin' (Plows, in McKay 1998:154).*

*'The belief that the environment is nothing to do with how society is run, that it is something remote and 'out there', somewhere to drive to for the day, something that just happens to be suffering because of the way we live. That we work in repetitive, meaningless jobs and that this is organised for the sake of profit is taken for granted,*



and remains somehow unconnected. This separation and presentation of the ecological crisis as unconnected to other forms of exploitation only serves the interests of business and state, and needs to be overcome if society is to survive' ((Voices from Earth First!, 1997:9).

Although one may be tempted to take up Plows' distinction between deep and social ecology, such attempts to establish a rigid polarity between the two ecologies is not, 'the real issue' (after Porritt, 1988:65) (as in the case of the physical and virtual sites of EDA, see Chapter Seven). Although the particular onus of each 'ecology' differs with the preferences of its protagonists, the commonalities between the philosophies far outweigh the differences. It is the acknowledgement of the potential for convergence rather than divergence in this case that characterises EDA-ers' position in the philosophical debate. As activists state,

'The false division between 'social' and 'deep' ecology has to be overcome before we can proceed. So-called deep ecology is not antithetical to social issues, any more than social ecology is to general environmental concerns. The division has arisen because of the misunderstanding between the two, exacerbated by the much publicised ramblings of some deranged misanthropes'<sup>10</sup> (Green Anarchist 1997:12).

Most EDA-ers thus appreciate, and recognise the strength of, an absence of rigidity and duality in the make-up of their idiosyncratic philosophies. It could be suggested that many activists create what Naess has called their own 'Ecosophy', with their chosen preferences and biases demarcating their ecosophy as 'Ecosophy 'X', 'Y' or 'Z''. It can be seen therefore that, although rarely referenced, the way in which EDA-ers attempt to 'theorise their own experience' complements many of academic notions relating to ecological philosophy. The use of ecological notions can be seen to reflect EDA-ers disposition to integrate both the human and non-human communities into their moral constituencies. The use of academic notions on their own terms, however, adds further evidence that EDA-ers prefer to 'do it themselves', i.e. EDA's own variations on ecological philosophy are another embodiment of their 'power through practice' ethos. The fact that EDA-ers do attempt to theorise their own experience also acts to subvert further the notion that EDA is solely about 'action'. It can be seen that the theorisation of ecosophies not only serves to justify 'action', but also instigates further motivations for more 'action'. There is a fusion therefore between 'thinking' and 'action' in EDA; and this point is exemplified further in the following section on the vocabulary of myths, stories and poems.

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<sup>10</sup>See Do or Die (1999).



EDA & the vocabulary of myths, stories and poems.

**'It is four years since a road was built through Solsbury Hill, and the story of the people who fought against it has fragmented into snatches of reminiscence. Like dreams. A story. A fable. Armed with my Dictaphone, I will track it down, pin it, cut it into hard fact. But I find that everything about the Hill is overlaid with myth and legend' (Evans, 1998:16).**

**As Chapter Three suggested, and the previous section on ecological 'ecosophies' illustrated, many of the aspects of 'environmentalism' associated with EDA are 'intangible' and difficult to translate into a rational cognitive vocabulary. For many activists, their passionate, emotional and physical connection to the environment is central to their personal identity, the environment is seen to be, in the words of Rainer Maria Rilke, 'the place from which [their] life flows' (1993:14). In all aspects of EDA, on protest sites, in newsletters, zines and webpages, some activists use alternative oral and literary traditions in order to convey their environmental attachment. These alternative traditions include the use of poetry, stories and myths.**

**'If we all go deep into ourselves and discover how deep is the source of our everyday lives, there we would find the environment of myth and begin to crave mythology as a suitable expression of our emotions' (More, 1996:235).**

**Myths, stories and poetry are used by EDA-ers as these literary and oral forms are capable of expressing the raw emotion and experience felt through environmental action. The 'unsayable' and 'intangible' aspects of environmental belief, find, as More suggests, an outlet through these forms;**

**'Mythology describes a level of experience...deep within or transcendently beyond.... One of the purposes of mythology is to transport our imagination to a level beyond the factual, giving full articulation to matters that can't be measured - things like love, hate, death, and evil - and noticing themes that underlie surface events and understandings.**

**Mythology also leads us deeper into the complexities of our emotions and personalities. I'm charmed by [myths], and they become my teachers, revealing secrets about the outside world or about the inner life that would remain hidden without them' (More, 1996:232-34).**

**In the spaces of EDA associated with Ashton Court, myths, poetry and stories were used on many occasions. There follows a number of examples of these literary forms.**

**'After a while / hour after hour / night and day / their endless barrage of noise / will take away / this silence forever / and this home to the wilderness / will become imprisoned in a cage / of intense noise'  
(Appendix 1:13)**

**The following poem, 'To Pioneer', was composed by one activist at Ashton Court, and was reproduced in the majority of handouts on site. The poem seeks to illustrate the capitalist**



imperative of the multinational, the dubious nature of 'translocation', and the economically viable but unsupported option of limestone aggregate recycling. Through the medium of poetry the depth of feeling generated by these apparently rational political issues can be evoked;

**To Pioneer.**

*Don't kill our wild orchids with the salt of our tears, For the life that we lost for a few profit years  
'It's not a true meadow,' you said, as if that, Were justification for rolling it flat  
And blasting a hole to the bowels of the earth, For a few pounds a ton that the stone there was w  
To us it's an orchid, a skylark, a fern; To the shareholder, nothing but money to burn.  
You don't see the value of that which you've stolen, As long as your faraway bankbooks are swoll  
To you it's a bland and unused piece of land, Of no status compared to your money in hand.*

*By way of appeasement you said "Translocate it", As if destruction could be so abated;  
It's still an experiment - nobody's proved, That habitats heal themselves after they're moved -  
And yet to the planners you said, "Translocation", As if, in your wisdom, your own invocation  
Could simply create, in place of your choosing, An image incarnate of what we were losing;  
As if, in your wisdom, you far better knew, The place the wild orchids should go when they grew.*

*And after a decade you'll leave us to ponder, The hole in the heart of the magic you'll squander:  
The deep hundred metres, a scar everlasting, Obscuring the ghost that we lost to your blasting;  
Lying a symbol to corporate waste, Of stone used once and discarded in haste  
As rubble which mounts in a pile, redundant, Never recycled, seeming abundant.  
Funny-how money-men don't count the cost, Of the wonder that faraway people have lost.  
Don't kill our wild orchids with the salt of our tears: Recycle the stone and be true Pioneers.*

EDA-ers also use other people's stories as a means of expression. At Ashton Court 'The Lorax' by Dr. Seuss was referred to on numerous occasions; there follows an edited version of this poem, (<http://www.thelorax.com/>).

*Mister! he said with a sawdusty sneeze, I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees.  
I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues. And I'm asking you, sir, at the top of my  
lungs--  
he was very upset as he shouted and puffed-- What's that THING you've made out of my  
Truffula tuft?*

*Look, Lorax, I said. There's no cause for alarm. I chopped just one tree. I am doing no  
harm.  
I'm being quite useful. This thing is a Thneed. A Thneed's a Fine-Something-That-All-People-  
Need!  
It's a shirt. It's a sock. It's a glove. It's a hat. But it has other uses. Yes, far beyond that.  
You can use it for carpets. For pillows! For sheets! Or curtains! Or covers for bicycle seats!  
The Lorax said, Sir! You are crazy with greed.  
There is no one on earth who would buy that fool Thneed!*

*I, the Once-ler, felt sad as I watched them all go. BUT... business is business! And business  
must grow regardless of crummies in tummies, you know.*

*What's more, snapped the Lorax. (His dander was up.) Let me say a few words about  
Gluppty-Glupp. Your machinery chugs on, day and night without stop making Gluppty-  
Glup. Also Schloppity-Schlopp. And what do you do with this leftover goo?... I'll show you.  
You dirty old Once-ler man, you!*

*You're glumping the pond where the Humming-Fish hummed! No more can they hum, for  
their gills are all gummed. So I'm sending them off. Oh, their future is dreary. They'll walk  
on their fins and get woefully weary in search of some water that isn't so smeary.*

*Continued...*



*Now all that was left 'neath the bad-smelling sky was my big empty factory...  
the Lorax... and I.*

*And all that the Lorax left here in this mess was a small pile of rocks, with one word...  
UNLESS. Whatever that meant, well, I just couldn't guess.*

*But now, says the Once-ler, Now that you're here, the word of the Lorax seems perfectly  
clear.  
UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better.*

The use of children's poems and references does not end with poems such as Dr Seuss' 'Lorax' (as noted previously, for example, Bulgaria was named after a children's puppet character from the 'Wombles'). Other childhood references are also identifiable in Kate Evans' *Cartoon Book of Tree Protesting* (1998). In order to describe the Selar evictions in Wales, she uses pictorial images similar to those in Roald Dahl's 'Fantastic Mr Fox' (1974). The latter story told of a fox and his family who stole from mean but rich farmers in order to survive being dug out of their home by these farmers<sup>11</sup>. See Figure 5:2.

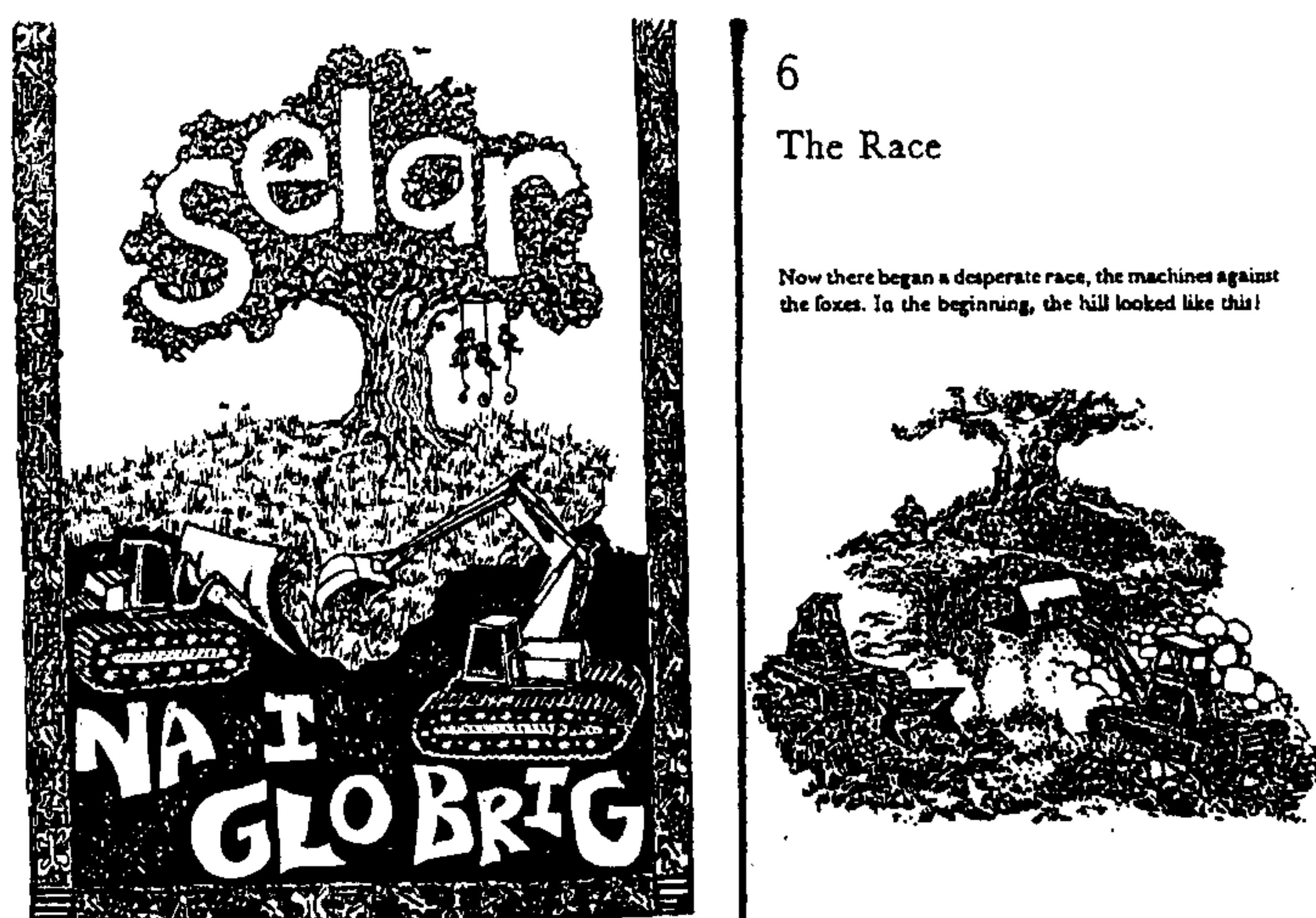


Figure 5:2. The 'No open coal' Selar campaign (Evans, 1998:75) / 'Fantastic Mr Fox' (Dahl, 1974:16)

<sup>11</sup> The image of wily mischievous fox evoked by the Selar pictures was transposed at Ashton Court to one a 'badger' (as noted in the following section). It is suggested that in the United States this image was transposed into the coyote or wolf. This image of the wolf / coyote has become symbolic of the environmental activist, particularly in the United States. Susan Zakin's history of the environmental movement in the U.S. was called 'Coyotes and Town Dogs' (1993), transferring to the radical activists the spirit and characteristics of the animals. Gary Snyder, a poet with strong links to the radical environmental movement (see Devall & Sessions, 1985), was perhaps the first 'modern' writer to use the image, to him the coyote (or the wolf) was the, 'Perfect anti-hero. There wasn't a clear dualism of good and evil - benevolence, compassion, help to human beings, sometimes, and had a certain dignity; and on the other occasions he was the silliest utmost fool, and at the same time the overriding picture is Old Man Coyote, he's just always travelling along, doing the best he can. [It is a] short hand for something in ourselves that is creative, unpredictable and contradictory' (in Harrison, 1994:69). I feel there are clear comparisons in this explanation of the coyote / wolf image and the description of EDA-ers in the UK (see later section).



At Ashton Court, activists would also tell their own stories of their experiences on actions. After some time on site, I realised that the same stories resurfaced time and again, and in each retelling it seemed that the tales became more decorative and exaggerated. In this way the kernel of 'truth' in the story remained the same, yet the details became embellished dependent on mood or audience. It seemed as if activists were creating 'memory myths', a process that Harrison explains,

'In order to crystallise the past, the mind first has to select, distort and compress its subject matter before producing what is in effect a single, highly-charged memory myth. Clearly, these memory myths will not stand examination in the light of strict biographical truth, but that does not mean they deserve to be dismissed as self-indulgent fancies. They do bear a relationship to this truth, albeit an oblique one, and they possess a truth of their own, a metaphorical truth to which biographical and historiographic criteria do not apply. They are metaphors invented to digest and make sense of the past; they provide a way of giving significant shape to the sequence of events that make up the development of self. They are necessary legends, without which our past experience would be nothing but a chaos of footprints in the mud. Myths are the poetic expression of experience; they move their truth to loved events, but cannot be deconstructed into them' (Harrison, 1986:119).

There follows an extract from my field diary that illustrates the emergence of one such memory myth, I felt the exaggeration and decoration of the story was only just beginning;

This afternoon some decide to go on a bit of an action - its become a 'mission' apparently - to try to get the stuff back that was pinched by the security on the nightshift (the new security from Newbury). I decided to stay because I imagined it would be a completely unsuccessful venture - mission impossible haha(!). However, when the 'mission' came back, 'Bee' had nicked a blue hat, and the rest had got right into the offices inside the quarry! They were all telling this (fairy?) tale of how they did it. Jim got caught and was asked how he got in, he said he just walked through the front gate cos the guard was asleep! They're so slack! Nad was full of it, they felt as if they had put one over security, put them in their place, i.e. used wit and wile rather than violence to square up the odds. Everyone was well chuffed with the mission.'

(Whilst the others were on their 'mission'(!), Simon (from Kebele) told me a story about how careful you must be when you try these little actions. He said that if you nick stuff you're giving them a reason / excuse to be heavy handed and arrest you, or all of the people on site. He cited the story of someone or other at a camp stealing a yoghurt (!) and the site (almost 30 people apparently) were arrested) (Appendix I:23)

The variety of stories, poems and (memory) myths used by EDA-ers can be seen to transmit a number of benefits to campaigns. These benefits complement, and indeed help to create, activists' own cultural preferences. In much the same way as the mainstream media transforms



EDA into a morality play, the use by activists of stories, poems and myths can be seen to create similar configurations of the issues in question. Caricatures are depicted of the 'multinationals' / 'onceler' / 'farmers' / 'security' who are only interested in profit, and the 'activists' / 'lorax' / 'foxes' who stand up for the environment. The simplistic nature of these literary characterisations contrast with the complex and archaic nature of many of the rational economic arguments used in the political system. Due perhaps to their romantic simplicity these metaphors engage the reader / listener in the story being told. Through emotional, passionate and often comic engagement with the story the 'audience' is encouraged to feel part of the tale, and instead of feeling apathetic about a dull political issue, the audience sides with one or other of the parties. Clearly since these stories are part of the propaganda system developed by EDA-ers, they hope that these stories will move people to support their efforts and to begin involvement in 'action'. (In the same way as the propaganda system of modern society, the mass media, attempts to discourage this response).

The use by EDA-ers of myths, stories and poems also has the effect of encouraging individuals to develop their awareness and attachment to the environment. In all the cases above, the non-human environment (either explicitly or implicitly) is a key element in the story being told. Through engaging with these stories on an emotional level, the land somehow, as Evans notes above, becomes 'overlaid with myth and legend'. These stories thus help to facilitate 'identification' with the land, they are a catalyst in the transformation of, 'a flat, featureless landscape into a country full of sacred meaning' (Furlong, 1996:85). Ehrlich describes the connection created between humans and the non-human environment in spiritual terms, she sees the two as becoming 'bonded' together [from 'to bind', from the root of the word 'religion'] (in McLuhan, 1996:176). Stories, myths and poems can not only 'bind' humans to specific non-human environments, they can also help to create 'bonded' combinatorial networks within a larger context. On a personal level, when things were going badly on site, I found that thinking of the struggle at Ashton Court as part of a larger 'mythical' struggle between 'profit' and the 'environment' affirmed my location and the importance of the campaign. In the same way perhaps as some sort of religion or faith, it helped to convey meaning to the protest. Thomas More articulates this quality of myth;

**'Myth gives a person the sense of living in a meaningful story, the feeling that one's life makes sense and has value, and these sensations are the basis for self-confidence and stability, purpose and poise. Without myth, life has to be proven valuable everyday and is lived from profound anxiety; but with the awareness that one's life is grounded in eternal stories and motifs, one's own personal story begins to feel enchanted, and this feeling gives rise to a love of one's own life that is the cure for narcissism, insecurity, and self-doubt' (1996:238).**

From my experience in the third space it was clear that activists at Ashton Court benefited from feeling they were part of a larger context; as the following example illustrates;



'We've gained so much from being here. I can't really consider that we've given anything up at all. We've got a great place to stay, a lovely bender, I get to speak to new people every day. I'm outside, I'm getting alot more exercise and I feel a lot more confident in myself. I've never felt as good as I do now. I used to be an insomniac, now I don't have problems sleeping at all' (Scott, in Mitchell, 1998:14).

The use of myths and stories also explicitly locates EDA-ers within a larger context.

Mythologies and story-telling have a long history within the environmental movement, as well as in indigenous cultures around the world. A number of the key watersheds in radical environmental thinking have been passed on in the form of stories; One significant example is Aldo Leopold's story of how he began to think, feel and act in what now can be called a 'deep ecological' way. Other examples include Mowat (1994), and Watson (1994). In pre-modern, indigenous societies, be they Celtic, Aboriginal or Native American, use of myth has also been a traditional way of transferring meaning to phenomena (see Furlong, 1996)<sup>12</sup>. The use by EDA-ers of similar tools creates connections with both the wider radical environmental movement, as well as these indigenous cultures<sup>13</sup>. These connections are explicitly referred to by activists, Leopold's story for example is re-produced on a number of EDA websites (including <http://www.eco-action.org/dt/thinking.html>), and identification with indigenous tribes are noted in many activist's stories, as this example from an activist at Twyford Down illustrates;

#### INDRA'S STORY

*The landscape around Winchester, a countryside lost, its history hidden and ignored, unveiled itself to me. St. Catherine's, for millennia a gathering-place of many tribes, a sacred hill ringed with trees - a meeting place of many paths and old trackways, linking hills and monuments the length and breadth of ancient Britain. Trackways trod deep into the land by travellers' feet. As I learned more of the land, my anger began to rise. History was repeating itself. Two thousand years ago, at the beginning of this age, tribal leaders gathered at this place. King Arthur, Queen Boudicca - pagan Celtic warriors, protectors of the land - fought against the Roman invaders and their straight roads and square towns, that threatened our already highly-sophisticated culture. It was the beginning of the end for Britain as the patriarchal tyranny of the Romans, and later Roman Christianity, supplanted and suppressed the Celtic goddess, symbol of the*

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<sup>12</sup> EDA-ers may have been inspired to use the image of the wolf / coyote by the use of this symbol in the oral narratives, ritual songs and healing chants of Native Americans tribes (especially those west of the Mississippi). From Native American mythologies one can ascertain that, 'The [coyote] stories they heard recounted the exploits of a part divine, part-human, part-animal creature who belonged to a time when the animal were people. Being immortal, Coyote could never die. When he was killed, he always has to be revived' (Harrison, 1994:9). This potential for immortality, for linking the past with the present and the future, can also be seen to be a strong reason underlying the use of oral narratives by radical environmentalists. In the case of Leopold's story perhaps, one could argue that the spirit of the wolf had, upon death, transferred itself to Leopold, changing his thoughts and world-view.

<sup>13</sup> Indeed, a Shoshone tribeswoman formally visited the camps at Ashton Court in order to express support and solidarity from her tribe to these EDA actions.



*Earth - symbol of respect for plants, animals, people, the land itself; for feminine wisdom and for the whole interconnected cycle of all life. We drew our inspiration and life from the land, as we protected it, feasting on the natural bounty of the Earth: seasonal crops, berries and edible mushrooms. We drank from clear springs and our clothes were worn till they fell apart then stitched back together with colourful cloth. Smoke from fires permeated our clothes and dried the sweat. The lack of toxins in our bodies produced the sweetest alluring aroma and became a familiar scent, mocking the deodorant of over-chemicalised bodies. The Romans wanted to civilise us. They also wanted straight roads - and lots of them. The magic that surrounded the tribe now engulfed me. Advertising and consumerism shouted at me, full of lies and something more sinister - a corruption, and imprisonment of our very souls!*

*(<http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/guest/tribe/home.html>).*

The explicit connections that are made by EDA-ers between themselves and indigenous cultures, and the practical usage of oral and literary devices that characterise these cultures, can be seen as an attempt by EDA-ers to reclaim a history that they perceive to share with these indigenous peoples. Although disparate in terms in geography and temporality, at a basic level these groups do share affinities in the way in which they practice relations with the non-human world. The reclaiming of this history can be seen to confer added strength to EDA as the combinatorial networks it now sits within are not purely geographical, but also historical.

*'Mythology is vitally important, as essential to Earth Firsters as founders' resumes are to mainstream environmental organizations' (Scarce, 1990:61).*

The use of myths, stories and poems by EDA-ers can thus be seen to characterise as well as strengthen the culture of EDA in a number of ways. These oral and literary devices can be seen as tools to recreate the holistic nature of experience that was atomised through renaissance science (see Chapter Two). These devices serve to integrate not only the intellect into the ecological debate, but also the heart. As one Earth Firster states,

*'You're never going to reach somebody completely through intellect. You can speak to somebody until you're blue in the face and you're not going to get anywhere if there's not something to steer their heart...We've always had the Emma Goldman approach: If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution' (from Scarce, 1990:251).*

In the same way as involvement in 'action' engenders engagement with an empowering 'spirit' (as stated earlier in this chapter), myths and poems are also capable of re-establishing similar ties between individuals and their own spirit and identity. Through the ability to convey the emotional and passionate elements of environmental concern, these literary devices give activists a medium to express their own feelings, experiences and 'ecosophies'. Through this articulation, stories also allow EDA-ers' 'audience' to empathise with the situation, often re-establishing their own connection to environmental concern, and the land in general. It is also



clear that the use of stories, myths and poems has the effect of 'feeding' EDA, in the same way as the alternative media (as noted in Chapter Four). These oral and literary devices become one of the key vocabularies of activists, they are 'our stories' (after Snyder, in White, 1994:140). They are stories not only created *by* activists (reflecting the Do-it-Ourself ethos), but they are also *about* activists, functioning as empowering examples to others who may want to get involved. In this way, such stories strengthen and sustain activism. Use of these devices also sustains EDA by placing it within a larger context. This context comprises a long historical lineage of eco-activists, both in western, and indigenous cultures. The use of myths and stories in this way helps to affirm the identity and importance of the struggles EDA-ers are involved in as they become located in broad temporal and spatial communities. The prevalence of myths, poems and stories in EDA thus demonstrates how non-rational 'theories' are used by activists in order to fuse the thinking and doing elements of EDA. Theory and practice is not segregated in EDA, rather conflated, existing in a mutually supportive and synergistic relation. The following section illustrates how more overtly rational debates are utilised by EDA-ers towards this same end.

#### EDA & the vocabulary of rational political theory.

'[We need to] think more deeply about who we are and what we do. [EDA needs to] get... more theoretically clued up and specifically define itself against the positions represented in the [media]' (Voices from Earth First!, 1997:139).

'The first thing we must do is to decide what we are for and against. Until this is sorted out we will just be a vague and largely irrelevant nuisance' (Green Anarchist, 1997:13).

As we have seen in the previous sections, EDA-ers do not solely 'act' in terms of physically jumping in front of bulldozers. EDA-ers also attempt to invoke their own cultural preferences through using the vocabularies of philosophy and myth. This section will describe a fourth vocabulary used by EDA-ers towards this end; it will illustrate the ways in which EDA-ers engage with the language of 'rational politics'. As before, it will be argued that EDA-ers engage with this vocabulary as a means to invoke their cultural preferences, but it can be seen that the use of this more conventional vocabulary seeks to integrate more mainstream constituencies into their combinatorial networks. These ends are achieved in three main ways: EDA-ers argue against the liberal democratic power system, and for 'power through practice' on the individual level; they argue for an holistic treatment of 'environmental' issues; and they use these vocabularies to critically reflect on their own campaigning successes and failures. Each of these three elements will be discussed in turn.

Activists at the Ashton Court Quarry campaign argued against the liberal democratic system of power principally through the virtual spaces of EDA. The main website for the campaign



expressed activists' criticisms of the democratic process;

#### DYNAMITING DEMOCRACY

The ongoing battle to save Top Park Field from the threat of quarrying has thrown up a whole range of issues, one of which is the rights of the public in a supposedly democratic society. It would seem that the planning system and the legal system have evolved with the rights of business, landowners and developers in mind. The rights of the rest of the population seem to be of minimal importance.

Before the planning decision was made the general public were allowed to give depositions at the planning and transport committee meeting. The rules: you can speak for five minutes on the condition that you don't discuss the relevant planning application. Sounds like the rules of a bad party game to me! The result is that very little real discussion of the issues around the recycling of aggregate takes place, and councillors often don't get a true sense of alternatives that could solve in an imaginative way the problems of job creation and environmental destruction.

People who object to a planning application have no right of appeal to the council. Only a planning applicant can appeal against a planning decision. So, following North Somerset Council's decision to give planning permission our only option was to take legal action based on technicalities. If Pioneer Aggregates had been turned down they would have had an automatic right of appeal based on the real issues of development and environment. So, on to the legal challenge, and off to the High Court where ... we lost. The judge decided that, although our case had merits, as members of the public using a public park we didn't have sufficient interest in the meadow to proceed with a judicial review!

(<http://www.gn.apc.org/cycling/ashtoncourt>)

This engagement with the political issues associated with Ashton Court can be seen to form an integral part of the virtual spaces of this campaign. It could be argued however, that this engagement only existed due to Bristol Friends of the Earth's previous connection to the anti-quarry campaign. Volunteers working primarily for Bristol FoE compiled the above article, although these individuals were also involved in EDA at both the physical and virtual spaces of Ashton Court. (This latter point illustrates that although many activists and academics view a sharp delineation between EDA groups and more established organisations such as FoE in the abstract<sup>14</sup>, in reality these groups, and their 'members', often overlap.) It is not the case, however, that EDA obtains its political analyses solely through the work of more organised environmental groups. Indeed, general differences can be identified between the orientation of the political arguments of groups such as FoE, and those promulgated by EDA-ers (examples of which follow). These differences result from the disparate cultural preferences desired by each party. In general terms, the more mainstream organisations engage with political vocabularies in order to lobby the liberal democratic systems of power. These groups do not explicitly challenge the liberal system and seek its revolution, they attempt to 'green' this system through

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<sup>14</sup> See Honigsbaum, 1994.



a process of evolution<sup>15</sup>. In contrast, EDA-ers recognise the democratic deficits that exist in the liberal democratic system (as outlined in Chapter Two), and respond to these by engaging with political arguments in order to engender change themselves. Complementing the power ethic already noted, EDA-ers attempt to take power themselves through practice. As a result of these cultural orientations, mainstream organisations focus on specific arguments that are hoped will win backing in the democratic system and provoke relative improvements in environmentally related developments. However EDA-ers engage with more mainstream political vocabularies in a much broader fashion. As the following excerpt from a flyer disseminated at a Bristol Reclaim the Streets action exemplifies;

**Bristol Street Party Questions answered? Handout.**

Far too many of us are trapped in the belief that simply putting our cross on a bit of paper every 5 years is enough. We have sat back and seen the mess and carnage that those who rule have created, and believe that we can start to do more. Politicians refuse to address the real issues that surround our daily lives, so we have to do it for ourselves, in this so called 'DEMOCRACY' in which we only have a choice of two parties. We are told, if not taught, that the solution to our life struggle is to 'BUY' and buy more and then we will be happy. They actually think that we can be bought! IS THIS TRUE!?![...] Its happening now, it has and will continue to happen all around the country, across Europe and the rest of the world. Until people start taking control of their lives and their communities. A street party is one very visual example. Desperate times require something out of the ordinary. TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIVES, PARTY!

The above quotation illustrates the broad (perhaps superficial) scope of political analysis that generally features in EDA publications. Complementing many of the arguments posited in Chapter Two, it can be noted that activists perceive individuals to be treated purely as consumers by liberal democracy. Coupled to this, the indirect system of democracy that prevails grants them inadequate political representation in terms of frequency, as well as choice. The existence of this system perpetuates and compounds the passive position of the public. It can be seen that RTS posit the only way to change this situation is through individuals taking control of their political lives. This can be achieved in an enjoyable way, by taking the street in the form of a street party. On a national scale, Reclaim the Streets interrogates the political function of a street party in more detail;

'The privatisation of public space in the form of the car continues the erosion of neighbourhood and community that defines the metropolis. Road schemes, business "parks", shopping developments - all add to the disintegration of community and the flattening of a locality. Everywhere becomes the same as everywhere else. Community becomes commodity - a shopping village, sedated and under constant surveillance. The desire for community is then fulfilled elsewhere, through spectacle, sold to us in simulated form. A tv soap "street" or "square" mimicking the arena that concrete and capitalism are

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<sup>15</sup> In other words, these groups lobby for 'ecologically modern' (Hajer, 1989) solutions to environmental crises.



destroying. The real street, in this scenario, is sterile. A place to move through not to be in. It exists only as an aid to somewhere else - through a shop window, billboard or petrol tank'

(<http://www.gn.apc.org/rts/>).

It can be argued that in the above excerpt Reclaim the Streets are not engaging purely with a debate about the private car, but broadening the issue into a discussion on 'public spheres and spaces' (similar to that outlined in Chapter Two). Following the points made in the Bristol RTS flyer, the above excerpt conceives the street to be reduced from a community (presumably with some sort of social values associated with it) to a commodity (purely conceived in economic terms). This reduction has resulted in a 'disneyfication' of the street, with authentic participation, communication and community removed<sup>16</sup>, and these practices packaged and sold back to a now passive population through the mainstream media. The desire for authentic community relations is thus tangible not only through the success of these packaged simulations, but also in the almost romantic and trouble-free portrayal of communal decision-making;

'We are about taking back public space from the enclosed private arena. We believe in... taking back those things which have been enclosed within capitalist circulation and returning them to collective use as a commons. A Street Party, itself reclaimed from the inanities of royal jubilees and state "celebrations", is just one recent initiative in a vibrant history of struggle, both to defend and to take back collective space. From the Peasant's Revolt to the resistance to the enclosures, from the land occupations of the Diggers to the post-war squatters, on to the recent free festivals, peace camps, land squats and anti-roads movement. Everywhere, extraordinary people have continually asserted not only the need to liberate the commons but the ability to think and organise for themselves'

(<http://www.gn.apc.org/rts/>).

'Reclaiming the streets' is thus argued to be one modern-day facet of a larger historical struggle for reclaiming the commons. It is argued that street parties should not occur solely when authority permits this (in the case of Jubilees), but when the 'people' decide. As with the vocabulary of myth, these political arguments seek to locate present-day actions within a broader context, not only to strengthen the contemporary culture of EDA, but also provide tangible examples of popular protest that individuals can identify with and become empowered by. It can be seen, therefore, that RTS use the street party in order to encourage individuals to perceive themselves as autonomous, to not accept the passive position that they perceive the liberal state has reduced them to. The existence of the street party itself is an example of what can be achieved when individuals come together in action.

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<sup>16</sup>This perhaps reflects the Rousseauist assumption pertaining to authentic communication, i.e. that only physiognomic face-to-face contact is the true form of authentic communication (see Young, 1990).



**'Reclaim the streets a single issue group? Well, if the overthrow of all hierarchy, domination and exploitation is a single issue, then yes, single issue!' (Voices from Earth First!, 1996:6).**

The second main way in which EDA-ers engage with the vocabulary of theoretical politics is to articulate their holistic conceptualisation of the environment. As noted in the section on 'social ecology', many EDA-ers view the 'environment' to not only include non-human species and landscapes, but also social justice, community and urban issues. As a result, EDA-ers do not make a distinction between issues such as quarrying and road or house building (since similar political philosophies link the two i.e. the predict and provide approach, and the 'destruction / development' of one environment leading to the 'destruction / development' of another), whilst access to public land (be it in urban or rural areas) is not distinguished as a separate issue from access to and representation in liberal democracy. This holistic conceptualisation of the environment is apparent in many campaigns that are framed as 'single issues' by mainstream politics and press, but are framed by EDA-ers as connected;

**'Day by day we see the war against us intensify. The air that we breathe, the food that we eat and the water that we drink poison us. The ozone shield that protects us is ripped apart. Forests that have grown for thousands of years are cut down. Animals are tortured and killed for the sake of profit. Grinding tedious work and consumer culture dominate our lives. Vibrant diverse life is replaced by cold monotonous concrete. Yet in more and more places new shoots of life are breaking through. Bulldozers are sabotaged, genetically engineered crops destroyed, forest gardens planted, offices disrupted, land squatted and collectives established - all part of a global struggle to destroy the system that is wiping out the future and making the present a misery...' (from flyer for Earth First! Summer Gathering, 1999).**

This holistic conceptualisation of the 'environment' is not only apparent in the vocabulary of activists, it is also identifiable in their practice. For example, many 'environmental' activists participated in the actions against cat vivisection at Hillgrove (special trips were organised from the camps at Ashton Court to this end), as well as being RTS participants, hunt saboteurs, 'radical' cyclists etc.. As my field diary noted,

**'it seems that the activists at Ashton Court / Kebele / Bristol EF! / RTS / This Land is Ours are more or less overlapping...its just that at Ashton Court they are more visible since this is the portion of the EDA iceberg that is most apparent to most people' (Appendix I:8)**

The fact that many of the same individuals participate in various 'environmental' causes has been noted in texts produced by activists; for example,

**'road protester becomes airport protester becomes The Land is Ours urban squatter becomes rave-goer becomes EF!er ad finitum simply through her/his presence on that particular campaign or demo. It is impossible then to talk about (for example) EF! and the protest movement as if they were separate entities: individuals flow in and out of**



either group. So, often, more than affiliating with other groups/campaigns, we are - we become - those other groups' (Plows, in McKay, 1998:158).

The difference in EDA-ers' attitude towards 'environmental' issues and more traditional perspectives was particularly explicit in the case of EDA-ers' support for the Liverpool Dockers<sup>17</sup>. What would have traditionally been a 'class' or 'union' issue mobilised environmental activists due to their perception that it was a community and environment issue; as one activist recalls;

'Liverpool was important... because it shows how resistance has changed across the generations - the dockers look to negotiating over reformist demands and the solid, pre-1980s working class communities that Thatcherism has atomised (resistance there is now about crime) and [EDA-ers] are about direct action to smash this society and counterculture recreating community. Those involving themselves in this new wave of resistance should come to learn and participate, not teach and manipulate. The 1980s are over' (Green Anarchist, 1997:24).

It can be seen therefore that EDA-ers' holistic conception of environment has the effect of broadening out the constituency to which EDA could become the preferred political tactic. Due to this conception of the environment EDA becomes increasingly inclusive, integrating new and increasingly diverse groups into combinatorial networks. This increasing inclusivity is something that many EDA-ers welcome, but reflecting the paradoxical nature of EDA, this is not universally the case. This point can be demonstrated if we turn to the third use of EDA-ers' 'theoretical' vocabulary: reflection and criticism.

'If, over the next few years, we don't start uniting the pockets of resistance that already exist, if we allow ourselves to retreat into secretive sect that slag each other off and are endlessly suspicious of anyone new, we will simply be picked off struggle by struggle. If we do start to involve new people in in-yr-face direct action in their hundreds, in their thousands, then the sky's the limit' (SchNEWS Survival Guide, 1999:5).

'Reclaim the Streets provides an excellent example of how a philosophy has become washed out in order to grow larger, after all linking up with striking workers is hardly what the movement set out to achieve' (Green Anarchist, 1998:13).

In the words of Scarce, and as noted at the end of Chapter Three, EDA is 'chock full of contradictions' (1990:220). When the political vocabulary of EDA is examined this becomes increasingly evident. Each activist appears to have different opinions on the specifics of EDA campaigns, and how they could and should be improved. Although this may create a number of problems and tensions within the movement if it continues to grow (as occurred with the group Earth First! in the United States (see Lee, 1995)), the existence of such discussions

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<sup>17</sup> See SchNEWS Annual, 1998.



provides evidence of the fact that EDA is not solely about action, but also encompasses discursive debate. As an exemplar of the way in which activists have discussed EDA, we focus on the debates associated with the physical space of action.

As noted in a previous section, the physical spaces of EDA are seductive to activists. However, many activists have questioned the continuing place of protest camps in the long-term strategy of EDA. Many have questioned the sustainability of camps in terms of activists' physical and mental health;

**'One of the things about protest sites is that since you are occupying the area that you want to save it takes over everything. This tends to make the experience fucking exhausting and intense. The last site I lived on I felt like I was on the job every minute of every day. Just when you were about to relax there were pigs at the gate or local nutters in the kitchen and you would have to get up and sort it out' (Do or Die, 1999:158).**

The exhausting nature of the physical spaces of EDA often leads to activist 'burnout'. At Ashton Court a number of individuals contracted gastric 'flu due to continual stress, inadequate sleep and diet (whilst I lost a stone-and-a-half in weight and suffered from IBS for two months). With long term involvement in EDA many activists question the ability of individuals to maintain this intense commitment to the physical spaces of EDA;

**'the physically [stress] of sites raises the question of how we can keep going in the long term, where will current activists be in 20 years time? I fear that those that are not teaching, academics or social workers will be tending their permaculture plots, all saying, 'Well I did my bit in the in the 1990s - but it didn't work'. The rest will be in loony bins or night shelters' (Do or Die, 1999:18).**

Other debates form around the physical spaces of EDA and their exclusivity. These debates touch on the way EDA privileges involvement by the young and the physically able, and tends to valorise 'hard core' commitment and criticise mere 'support'. As one activist cites;

**'There is a damaging division between 'activists' and 'supporters'. I became increasingly annoyed with meeting people who, when they discovered I was involved at Newbury would start conversations along the lines of, 'Oh well done, you're a hero. I wish I could be involved, but I can't 'cos I'm not able'. Hearing this would make me feel I was the cannon fodder for other peoples' environmental consciences, and apart from feeding one's own ego, there is little use for attitudes like that. Everyone is able to do direct action, and it is vital to get that message across' (Voices from Earth First, 1998:28).**

EDA-ers thus debate, question and reflect the strengths and weaknesses of their action in the physical spaces of EDA<sup>18</sup>, a point that is generally ignored in the general characterisation of EDA practice (see above). EDA-ers not only engage with such discursive behaviour using the

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<sup>18</sup> The environmental sustainability of sites has also been brought up, often by external commentators of EDA (see Appendix I:13). Activists have also commented on this issue, see Appendix VI.



'language of the layperson', they also integrate more 'academic' theorisations into their discussions. This is a point that has already been illustrated in the section on EDA ecosophies, media 'recuperation' (Chapter Four), as well as the way in which the public space literature has been stylised by RTS. But we can also see that academic literature on 'taking space' has been utilised by EDA-ers, for example;

'People who've lived at road protests, squats or on the road already know, whether they realise it or not, the joy of the Temporary Autonomous Zone. However short-lived. TAZs are a space in time liberated from Leviathan and of course oppose it too. A place to meet face-to-face with like-minded people is not only desirable but also necessary for the creation of a better world and in my opinion the TAZ is our best way of achieving our aims' (Green Anarchist, 1997:16).

Activists not only engage with academic theory, but also with academics themselves. This is achieved principally through virtual mailing lists, the 'Social Movements' mailing list provides one good example of this (social-movements@staffmail.wit.ie). One activist's contribution to this particular mailing list is instructive to us here:

'What is important [to note] is that there is a symbiosis between values and structure - i.e. the structures, the nuts and bolts of the dominant paradigm have values saturated in them and they are taken for granted and so any solution likewise is a symbiotic arrangement between values and structure... activists just get on with this (i.e. there is a political / environmental reality which is also a moral / ethical imperative)'

From respondant6@email.address Wed Jun 2 14:40:00 1999

This contribution to the social movements mailing list forms a useful basis for the conclusion to this chapter. In light of this extract, this chapter has illustrated that EDA-ers attempt to resist the political / environmental reality created by the dominant paradigm. They achieve this by taking space and then subverting and adapting its political status. In the various spaces of EDA, activists attempt to invoke their own political visions that involve a 'symbiotic arrangement' between 'values and structure'. More specifically, EDA-ers believe in an ethos of power through practice at the level of the autonomous individual, and the creation of networks involving both humans and non-humans. EDA-ers perceive it to be a 'moral / ethical imperative' to put these visions into practice, and do so in a number of ways. The most visible of these is through the taking of place in the physical spaces of EDA, and many activists and academics suggest that this is the only vocabulary chosen by EDA-ers. It can be argued that this conclusion is reached particularly due to the 'secondspace' perspective adopted by commentators. But if a 'thirdspace' perspective is taken, it is possible to see that three other major vocabularies are used to invoke EDA's cultural preferences. Due to the many individuals involved in EDA, some choose the more practical vocabulary of action, some the philosophical, some the poetic, and some the more political (or combinations of these). As a consequence this chapter has



illustrated that EDA is not characterised by simply one vocabulary, or by individuals who merely 'act' rather than 'think'; rather these vocabularies become symbiotically arranged and saturated into the very 'nuts and bolts' of EDA practice. The following chapter takes the insights gained from looking at the spatialities and vocabularies of environmentalism associated with EDA practice as viewed from the third space perspective, and outlines the broad characteristics of EDA that can be identified as a result. Chapter Five's insights will also contribute to the assessment of Environmental Direct Action in Chapter Seven.



**Chapter Six. The style and substance of EDA.**

From a third space perspective we have seen that EDA-ers take place in numerous ways, and use multiple vocabularies in order to invoke their own cultural preferences. As a result, this thesis has demonstrated that Environmental Direct Action is not solely distinguished by 'action' in the physical spaces of EDA (although this is a highly visible aspect of the phenomenon) but also by a range of other 'practices' or 'praxes' that synergistically interact to form the values and structure of EDA. How then can these values and structure be best understood? This chapter looks at the distinguishing features of the various practices involved in EDA: it will discuss the level of 'responsibility', 'violence' and 'accountability' characterised by EDA practices; it will determine the nature of 'organisation' that distinguishes EDA, and the 'rhizomatic' character of the phenomenon. The chapter will then attempt to ascertain the political significance of EDA, principally through discussing the ways in which the liberal democratic state has attempted to control it.

**'[Environmental] Direct Action is founded on the idea that people can develop the ability for self-rule only through practice...It is individuals asserting their ability to control their own lives and to participate in social life without the need for mediation or control by bureaucrats or professional politicians' (RTS, 1996).**

Reflecting the statement by RTS, I would suggest that the principal defining element of EDA is that those involved take responsibility to invoke their own cultural preferences. Due to the deficits of democracy experienced in the liberal democratic state (as noted in Chapter Two, democracy has become a means to confer authority to unaccountable representatives, rather than as a form of popular power), EDA-ers believe that the only way their cultural values will be invoked is if they practice them themselves<sup>1</sup>. The pre-eminence of such an attitude resonates with the following description of civil disobedience,

**'Civil disobedience meant different things to different people; but its essence common to all, was the *rediscovery of personal responsibility in action*...the state had forfeited the obedience of the individual. Personal disobedience became a categorical imperative' (Benewick & Smith, 1972:7, *emphases added*).**

I would argue that, from a third space perspective, the definitive issue in relation to EDA thus becomes the fact that activists put this responsibility to invoke specific environmental preferences into practice - rather than discriminating against the means of invocation utilised (which occurs through the lens of 'second space'). The third space perspective recognises the social agency aspect that influences individuals' action, it integrates the differing skills, as well as

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<sup>1</sup> As Booth (in Green Anarchist, 1996:24) states, 'We must make an assertion of moral responsibility. The understand[ing] that politics is an ethical void is a call for us to take back control over our own lives. We cannot value [politics] but we can and must find value in our own lives'.



constraints, that combine to influence an individual's activity. As a result, this outlook allows a multitude of alternative means of invocation to be utilised: EDA becomes defined by the formation of environmental defences, eco-theories, myth creations as well as political analysis. One can therefore practice EDA if one adopts, in the words of Maxey, a 'direct action attitude'. This attitude is the conviction to 'do what you can from where you are' (1999:202). Individuals can assert their own power through acting in ways that broadly conform to their personal constraints, and seek to protect the environment through linking their actions in with other individuals', thus forming combinatorial networks of EDA. The following comment from Merrick (at the Newbury bypass actions) complements this perspective;

'A woman from Chieveley, three miles away, gave us a pair of jeans and a couple of jumpers. She was a single mother with no spare cash and no spare time, and apologised for not giving more. But I said, Look, I've got not cash either. But I have time and an able body. I give those 'cos I can, and other people supply the money and food. As long as it all comes in from somewhere, we're fine. I give what I can, you've given what you can, we're doing the same thing' (Merrick, 1997:34).

From the point of view of third space, we thus also become aware of the multifarious spaces individuals inhabit in their lives. Due to a variety of factors, individuals cannot solely inhabit the physical spaces of EDA, but due to a range of commitments, play out their lives in a range of spaces. As a result, EDA - this 'direct action attitude' - is not limited to physical spaces, but also includes virtual, media, academic, as well as other spaces. To reiterate, to practice EDA is to have the conviction to, 'do what you can from *where* you are' (1999:204, emphasis added). As Paul Watson, founder of the Sea Shepherd Society, states;

'For years, I have said in lectures that a person did not have to... ram a whaling ship or sabotage a bulldozer to be effective. The difference between those who help make a positive contribution and those who do not is motivation. If all people enlisted their talents, skills, imagination and energy in the service of the Earth, that would be sufficient' (1994:174).

The third space perspective thus suggests that one can be a participant in EDA even if one does not conform to the stereotypical 'eco-warrior' image. This outlook encourages individuals to do their bit to bring their lives in line with environmental values, and empowers them to believe that this effort is worthwhile and makes a difference. As a consequence, the third space perspective thus views EDA as an inclusive phenomenon that can unite individuals in many different spaces, both in counter-cultural, but also mainstream society, in combinatorial networks.



**'[Environmental] Direct Action places moral commitment above positive law' (RTS, 1996).**

**As individuals take personal responsibility to change the 'political-environmental reality' (see Chapter Five), activists' own cultural preferences increasingly come into practical conflict with the cultural norms of liberal democratic society. At the extreme, this conflict is characterised by EDA-ers breaking the laws of hegemonic society in order to remain true to their own cultural preferences. In such cases, the inherently political nature of EDA, and the threat it poses to the dominant hegemony, is made explicit. As my diary noted,**

**'By just being involved here [at Ashton Court] we are breaking the law, therefore it is in essence a political way to live...reminds of that lady at the M11 who said, 'all life is politics, if you step out of line'' (Appendix I:13).**

**The interaction between the cultural preferences of EDA and the liberal state will be discussed in terms of the state's attempts to control EDA later in the chapter, but at this point the ways in which EDA-ers engage with the issue of criminality will be examined. It is instructive to configure the elements involved in terms of (non)violence and (un)accountability. From experience in the third space, I found EDA to generally be committed in a non-violent way in respect to people and living things. As EDA-ers note the inspiration they have gained from civil rights and peace movements (see Chapter Four), their commitment to non-violence is perhaps unsurprising. One activist outlines their approach to non-violence in the following way;**

**'NVDA to me incorporates a stance where I take an action which directly confronts someone else whom I believe to be acting wrongly. That action is nonviolent because I am prepared to enter into dialogue to resolve the situation. Nonviolence is important because I might be wrong and may discover something during the action which forces me to re-evaluate my stance. If my action doesn't allow those that I confront space to back down or to explore my ideas in then no lasting change can result. This can be helped by thinking in advance about the action and consciously minimising intimidation or generation of fear'**

**From respondent11@email.address Tue Feb 17 13:50:52 1998**

**Non-violence can therefore be seen as means to create space for opponents to EDA to re-think and re-feel their opposition to activists' cultural preferences. The absence of non-violent tactics enables individuals to focus attention on the moral position taken by EDA-ers and the arguments they are expressing, rather than having this opportunity precluded through the use of violent tactics. As the following activists argue;**

**'There is no debate. We are a non-violent movement. The eco-warriors threaten our safety and credibility' (Fiona Stidworthy EF!, in Berens, 1997).**



**'I think it helped that there wasn't a hint of violence to detract from the campaign's message' (Leyland, 1997 (at the A30 campaign)).**

More cynically, it could also be argued that the forces of the state have endless arsenals that are orientated towards violence, and activists could not possibly hope to win if this terrain was chosen for battle. Due perhaps to the capacity of the state to orientate itself towards violence, in many cases of EDA non-violence is a difficult position to maintain, as the following activist conversation outlines;

**'Pablo: You see so many things that in the end you start to think, 'Fuck You', which is their [the forces of the state's] manufactured emotions.**

**Mark: They try to push you into a psychotic state.**

**Flora: To be really nonviolent is so difficult. It's not about not hitting someone. It is about feeling at peace inside yourself, and being able to protest like that' (Evans, 1998:181).**

Although EDA-ers in the United States have an ambiguous relationship to the philosophy of non-violence, in Britain in general, and at Ashton Court in particular, non-violence was far and away the dominant philosophy<sup>2</sup>. Only on one occasion during my time in the Ashton Court community did I witness or hear about a potentially violent incident, and this was, as the above excerpt implies, 'egged on' by security. (After night-long sleep deprivation and camp attacks by security, one activist rushed off yelling in the direction of the guards wielding a bread knife - only to return minutes later when his initial wave of aggression had passed). It appears to be far more common for protesters to be the victims of security guard (or even police) violence, be it actual or threatened (see below).

Although EDA in Britain is non-violent towards living things, it is often violent towards property. This action is known in different quarters as 'Monkey-wrenching' or 'ecotage'. Ecotage is aimed at inanimate objects with the objective of causing expensive delays to earth-damaging developments and costly damage to contractors' equipment. Scarce defines monkeywrenching as, 'a step beyond' civil disobedience, he states it is the, 'final step' in the defence of the environment, where, 'the [environment] defender becomes the [environment] acting in self-defense' (1990:97). Such action was first seen in the UK at Twyford Down when rice and sand were allegedly poured into earthmover engines in order to disable them. Ecotage was perhaps originally inspired by Edward Abbey's novel, 'The Monkey-Wrench Gang'

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<sup>2</sup>EDA-ers in the United States have a more openly ambiguous relation with the philosophy of non-violence than those in the UK, as the following quotation illustrates; 'Earth First!'s founders perceived non-violence as a tactic [rather than say a way of life]. In 1982 Dave Foreman wrote, 'I am entirely pragmatic about violence / non-violence. We should use whichever we feel comfortable with and whichever is most appropriate to a particular situation...I believe there is room in Earth First! for ex-Marines like myself and for followers of Gandhi. There are many paths one can take to defend our Earth Mother' (Scarce, 1990:72).



(1991). It was this novel that first sparked the debate on monkeywrenching as terrorism;

'I tried to make a clear distinction between sabotage and terrorism. My Monkey Wrenchers were saboteurs, not terrorists. Sabotage is violence against inanimate objects, machinery and property. Terrorism is violence against human beings' (Abbey, in Devall & Sessions, 1985:78).

This distinction between the object of violence appears to be the key element in the debate on sabotage as terrorism. It is clear however that UK governments (of either political persuasion) are keen to define EDA-ers who may participate in such activity as terrorists (see below)<sup>3</sup>. Despite this, violence towards inanimate objects does appear to remain a legitimate tactic for many EDA-ers in the UK (it was regularly practised at Ashton Court, actions including the removal of fences, panels and stakes, as well as plans to disable quarry conveyors<sup>4</sup>). The overwhelming attitude towards the tactic appears to me as follows;

'When you look at the damage the Government is doing to our countryside, a few diggers going up in flames pales into insignificance. The diggers can be replaced but our environment can't. The more we hit the contractors in their pockets, the more reluctant other companies will be to bid for new road schemes in the future' (Birch, in Berens, 1997).

'Anything goes as long as maximum precautions are taken to limit harm to living creatures'.

From respondent4@email.address Tue Feb 17 16:35:48 1998

'Whatever is necessary at the time and situation but generally no damage to living beings in the pursuit of bringing about real change [in] values'

From respondent1@email.address Fri Feb 6 17:18:37 1998

In contrast with the commitment to non-violence towards people, and violence towards property, the affiliation with accountability in the UK is perhaps a more contingent one. Although conventional civil disobedience involves the transparency of action and activist, helping therefore to supplement one's moral position<sup>5</sup>, I feel that with EDA, if a protester can break the law and get away with it, they will. (Only if arrest occurs will it then be used to their moral advantage, by highlighting the injustice of such an act).

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<sup>3</sup> Indeed the new Terrorism Bill currently passing unchallenged through government extends the definition of 'terrorist' to campaigning bodies, EDA-ers and workers in industrial disputes (see Dyer, 2000). Terrorism is defined by the Bill as an armed struggle or violence against any person or property inside or outside the UK.

<sup>4</sup>As my diary noted: 'gav jim and dan went into the quarry last night and took down 2 days of fence work - panels and stakes - apparently security caught them on film. but they dont really care. doing the stakes is just nuisance value. and it makes them feel good esp since it pisses off security so much. The others went into the quarry last night - gave security something to do - its abit like playing cat and mouse stuff...' (Appendix 1:23)

<sup>5</sup>As the following quotation by Martin Luther King exemplifies: 'One who breaks an unjust law must do it *openly, lovingly* (not hatefully) and with a *willingness to accept the penalty*. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and willingly accepts the penalty by staying in jail to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality *expressing the very highest respect for law*' (Martin Luther King, in Bedau, 1991).



**'Non-Violence and accountability give us the moral high ground' (Zoe Alford, in Bellos and Hill, 1997).**

**'Accountability is in some ways what we demand from others so we should arguably be accountable. Placing oneself in vulnerable situations is accountable but some might argue not always very sensible. Fear of prison and retribution from aggressive corporations; the strategic debate as to whether the action itself or the open explanation is most important; whether being imprisoned for your beliefs an effective form of protest; amongst other things are factors which complicate the secrecy and accountability quagmire. There are many perspectives on these issues'.**

**From respondent11@email.address Tue Feb 17 13:50:52 1998**

**Due to the multi-faceted nature of accountability, many activists find it difficult to take an absolute position on this issue. For example, if personal accountability for actions was consistently practised in the UK, it is unlikely that EDA could continue in its existing form. As a following section illustrates, the legal penalties for actual or suspected 'action' have risen to such a degree that likelihood of arrest and imprisonment has increased markedly. During a workshop on the legality of protests conducted at Ashton Court by a supportive lawyer, the concept of accountability for actions was treated with a high degree of humour by all those involved – no-one felt that it was worthwhile getting arrested voluntarily<sup>6</sup>. Despite the antipathy towards arrest, some EDA-ers accepted its inevitability in order to delay or prevent eco-destruction. For example, when the translocation of the wild flower meadow was due to begin at Ashton Court, two activists 'd-locked' themselves to the quarry gates in order to delay its commencement (see Figure 6.1). All concerned knew this action would result in arrest and a restriction zone being imposed on their future actions (i.e. they would no longer be able to live on-site). Thus the decision to be arrested at this point was not taken lightly by the activists concerned, but in the words of Foreman (co-founder of US EF!), such decisions are, 'strategic... thoughtful [and] deliberate' (1991:113)<sup>7</sup>.**

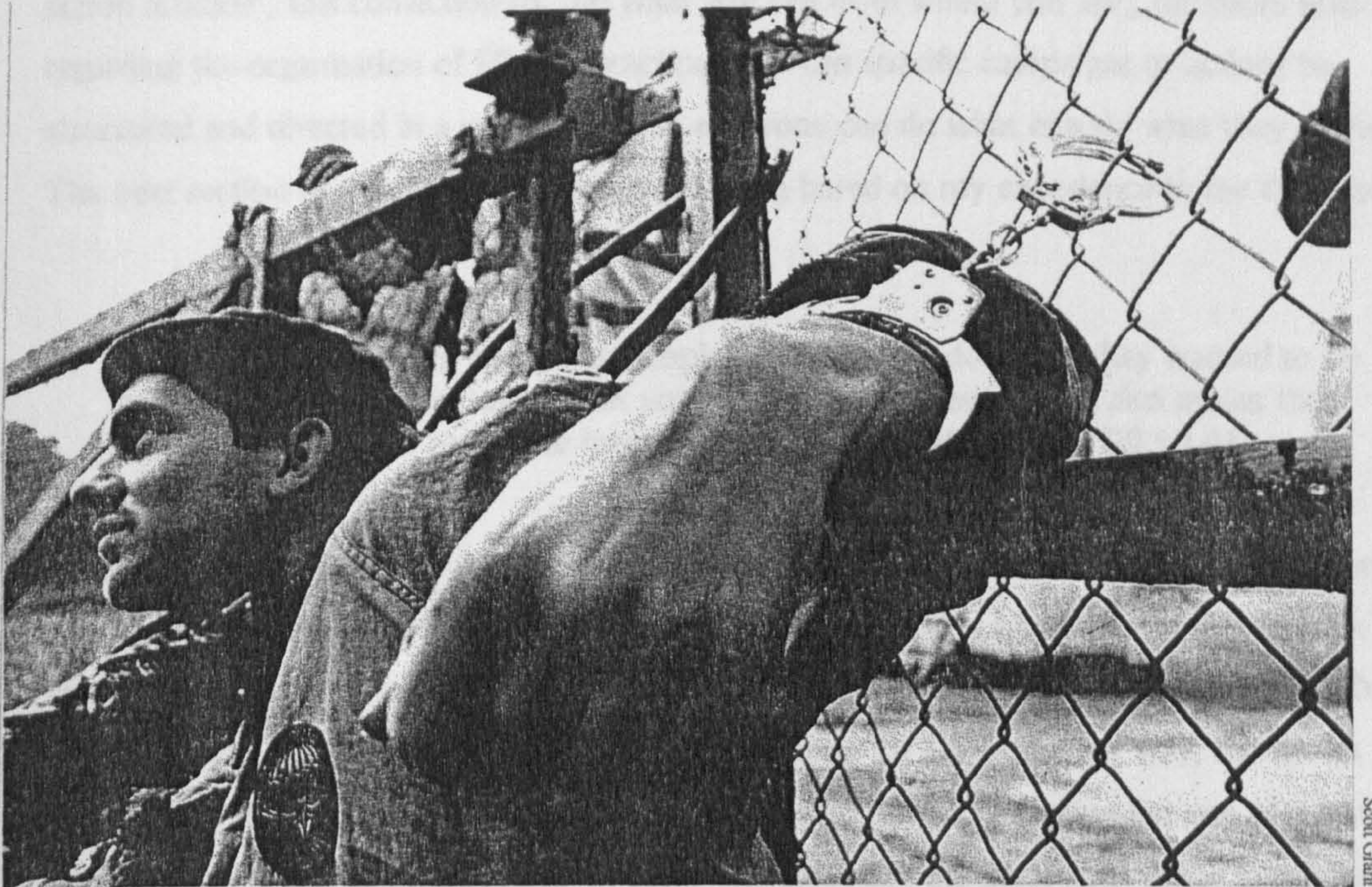
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<sup>6</sup> According to one activist: 'Mainstream publicity is a bit like being arrested. It is a fact of life and it is sometimes necessary, but it isn't the point and you don't try to make it happen for its own sake' (Voices from Earth First, 1998:36).

<sup>7</sup> In the UK more broadly, a good example of ecotage in which the protesters strategically, thoughtfully and deliberately committed and were accountable for their actions was an incident involving 'Ploughshares' activists. In January 1996 a group of four women broke into a British Aerospace base in Warton and attacked a Harrier Jet with hammers before decorating it with flowers. The Harrier was due to be sold to the Indonesian government to be used in the then alleged genocide in East Timor. The women committed 1.5 million pounds worth of damage, but left video and written evidence at the scene to publicise their action. At a subsequent trial, they were found innocent of causing criminal damage. The women called their action, 'fluffy but firm' (see Morgan, 1996).



Figure 6:1. 'Nad' at Ashton Court, d-locked by the neck to the quarry gates.



Due perhaps to the high risk involved in some EDA practices, activities such as ecotage are often carried out at night (ecotage is indeed sometimes called 'night-work', after Abbey's 'nachtwerke' (1975)). These activities are often practised alone, or with or group of trusted friends (known sometimes as cells, or affinity groups) and are rarely discussed outside of these groups. At Ashton Court, instances of ecotage were rarely discussed openly on site. It was the general rule that blame for such action was jokingly attached to the 'badgers' (a sett had been disturbed by the quarry workings and it seemed that the nocturnal creatures were intent on revenge). This type of EDA action thus does not attempt to court publicity, rather it is a direct attack on the profits of those perceived to be destroying the environment; as the following activists describe,

'Monkey Wrenching is direct action at its purest. If I stand in front of a digger then I may get hurt and the security guards may get hurt. But if I sneak out in the dead of night and decommission a piece of machinery, I'm not injuring anyone. I'm simply costing the company the maximum amount of money' (Jai, in Honigsbaum, 1994).

'Either you can take part in a mass protest or you can go out on your own in the dead of night, without telling anyone, and pour sand in a digger. That's not terrorism, it's an act of love' (E.L.F. in Vidal, 1995).

It can be seen therefore that EDA involves a number of eco-activities, all emanating from the conviction of individuals to take responsibility to invoke their cultural preferences. From a third space perspective, these practices are not seen in an elitist or hierarchical light, rather they are



seen as fitting in with individuals' personal skills and constraints, and to some degree with the strategic context of particular campaigns. However, if EDA is characterised by this 'direct action attitude', this conviction to, 'do what you can from where you are', questions arise regarding the organisation of EDA in practice; how can specific campaigns or actions be structured and directed in a situation where everyone can do what exactly what they choose? The next section of this chapter discusses this issue based on my experience in the third space.

**'...the key to organising was giving people the chance to do things they wanted to do anyway. Being in a tribe meant that you shared a worldview - but it also meant that you had the freedom to choose how to put it into action' (Zakin, 1993:141).**

Generally speaking, through my experience in the third space I encountered an atmosphere of mutual tolerance in the many spaces of EDA. In line with Zakin (above), and due to EDA's ethos of individual autonomy, those involved could contribute to the various spaces of EDA in ways that suited their own mood, skills and constraints. To put it another way, the spaces of EDA exhibited a lack of coercive authority. Some have labelled this situation one of 'anarchy' (see Button, 1988, amongst others<sup>8</sup>), but complementing the arguments made in relation to ecocentric theory, I would suggest that EDA-ers do not conform dogmatically to 'anarchy' per se, but instead are 'natural anarchists' (after Alderman, in Quigley, 1999:141). As Alderman states, a 'natural anarchist' is, 'someone who does not have to learn it, someone who does not need to struggle for this insight, someone who may, in fact not be able to express that insight' (ibid.). Or in the words of Roszak (1989:422);

**'These experiments blend into the tradition of anarchist socialism. [But] there is nothing doctrinaire about the matter; probably few of those involved have ever read Kropotkin or Malatesta. They have no need to. Their anarchism is the healthiest kind: a natural, rebelliously personal response to the distortions of urban industrial life and the technocracy, as spontaneous as the need to breathe free after airless captivity'.**

Due to the lack of coercive authority, individuals in the spaces of EDA were free to experiment and explore different activities that took their interest. For example, in the physical spaces of EDA at Ashton Court one activist spent a number of weeks making a floor for the communal fire pit out of 6 inch long sticks, whilst another spent days cutting a supermarket trolley into little pieces. Ultimately these activities came in useful on site (the floor kept the fire pit dry during wet weather, and the dismembered trolley was put in setting concrete to help strengthen 'lock-ons'). Thus activities that started off as a spontaneous pastime, often developed into an

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<sup>8</sup>According to McKay (1998:3) 'I do think that, even if it doesn't overtly espouse it, DIY Culture practices an intuitive liberal anarchism'. References to anarchism can be found periodically in radical environmental literature (Edward Abbey has described anarchy as 'democracy taken seriously' (in Lee 1995:98)).



ingenious practice with a functional consequence. The phenomenon of EDA as a whole can perhaps be described in this way. Due to the lack of coercive authority, and the freedom to allow each individual to turn their hands to activities that they choose, individuals experiment with activities and actions that sometimes prove successful (for example, the first EDA experimental actions in Hastings in the early 1990s (see Wall, 1999), inspired others to replicate and build on them, and led directly to the creation of the Donga Tribe at Twyford Down). Over time, such experiments have snowballed into the growing EDA movement and culture that has been studied in this thesis. In this light, EDA can perhaps be compared favourably to Prigogine's notion that suggests forms of order and organisation can arise 'spontaneously' (i.e. from the unplanned interaction of simple things) (see Prigogine & Stengers, 1984). This spontaneous organisation Prigogine calls 'self-organisation'. From my experience at Ashton Court, the spaces of EDA indeed had 'self-organised'. Individuals had gravitated to positions that suited their personal strengths and skills, and also suited the needs of the campaign. As a result, most things that needed to be achieved were achieved, without the need for formal group meetings or hierarchical decision-making. A good example of Craggy Island and Bulgaria's ability to 'self-organise' came in an incident when a number of local 'winos' were attracted to site (presumably under the impression that they could 'blag' some free alcohol). It was clear that these individuals had no wish to consider, or contribute to, the activities on site, and their presence would do little for the smooth functioning, or public image, of the camp. It was also thought that their presence could, at worst, mark the disintegration of the camp as a functioning entity. Whilst the 'winos' were comatose, a decision was arrived at to eject them from site, and their bags and belongings were taken to their known haunt in town. The next day the winos followed them voluntarily and did not return. The decision to eject these individuals was not arrived at through a formal meeting; it was clear to all concerned that the 'winos' had no real interest in EDA and threatened the camp. A number of activists therefore simply took their bags away.

Such examples of 'self-organisation' occurred frequently at Ashton Court, and it appeared to me that this process was so successful in this community due to the relative stability and coherence of the camps in terms of numbers and inhabitants. The core group of activists remained relatively constant at Ashton Court, and, as a result of this, a level of mutual trust and respect was established between activists. After time therefore these individuals seemed to function automatically as a collective unit, without having to think about it, or formally organise it<sup>9</sup>. In cases where an adequate amount of time was not available for a strong community unit to be developed, for example at the 'Pure Genius' camp at Wandsworth in London (see Brown, 1998), self-organisation was not achieved. Early in its lifetime, the camp suffered from similar

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<sup>9</sup>The notion that activists act as a collective, almost without even thinking about it, complements the idea expressed by Waters (1942:20) about Native American tribes, he states at some points these tribes, 'were one mind, one heart, they moved evenly together'. It also complements the notion expressed in relation to flocks of birds that seem to move as one organism (see Brown (1991:12), and also Gleick (1997)).



problems as stated above at Ashton Court, but due perhaps to the unwillingness of individuals to make unilateral 'ejection' decisions in this instance (and thus be open to the charge of dictatorial actions and coercive behaviour) the camp descended into utter chaos and ceased to function<sup>10</sup>.

It appears therefore that in the many spaces of EDA there are clear opportunities for 'self-organisation', but this process depends significantly on the stability and size of the space in question. Self-organisation is thus not guaranteed, there is a risk for the space to disintegrate into pure chaos, or indeed fossilise into a 'modern' structure of organisation (as in the case of 'Undercurrents', see below). Although Prigogine's notion of 'self-organisation' is useful to our understanding of EDA, activists themselves label their organisational structure 'disorganisation'. As SchNEWS describe, a 'disorganisation' is an, 'unstructured protest group of the mid 1990s, without the leadership of a conventional organisation' (In McKay, 1996:76). Similar descriptions are echoed throughout the EDA movement, as Lee comments on her work on Earth First! in the U.S.;

'Earth First! is more like an organism than an organisation...Earth First!ers beliefs prevented them from adopting the formal organisational hierarchy - organisational hierarchy was the hallmark of the industrial monolith, it stifled wildness and diversity' (Lee, 1995:59/60).

The 'disorganised' nature of EDA confers a number of positive attributes to the movement. In line with academic thinking on 'Post-Fordist' modes of organisation, EDA is dynamic and flexible in its structure, through experimentation it is quick to innovate and can respond rapidly to changes in its environmental and political context. Due to the absence of formal leaders, its figureheads cannot be removed and the movement end up directionless, since all those involved are their own leaders<sup>11</sup>. The benefits of this form of 'self'- or 'dis'- organisation can be seen in practice. Actions in the physical spaces of EDA are often spontaneous, and therefore difficult to prevent;

'Security didn't know what we were doing, because we didn't know until we did it. We'd all be sat round the fire and we'd go, 'Oh, we're bored, what shall we do? Shall we go and jump on some diggers? Yes, come on then!' and we'd leg it up the hill. There was no way they could know we were going to do it. There was one day we came up and there was about 80 security there: we were like,

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<sup>10</sup>The opportunity for mutual trust and respect to be generated is also influenced by the size and scale of the particular space of EDA. The physical spaces of Ashton Court remained quite small over their lifetime, and so, in the words of Green Anarchist, the communities were of a size, 'for each person in them to be respected as an autonomous individual'. As a result, 'In small communities, self-determination [c]ould replace hierarchy' (1998:12). In physical spaces that are larger, for example at Wandsworth, or Falmile, the opportunity for such processes, and thus 'self-organisation' may not be achieved.

<sup>11</sup>As Abbey stated, 'grown men [sic] don't need leaders, they are not sheep' ([www.utsidan.se/abbey/abbey.html](http://www.utsidan.se/abbey/abbey.html)). Evans (1988:4) refers to the individual autonomy aspect of EDA by calling the movement the 'many headed hydra'.



**'What's going on?', and they said, 'Ah, we've been tipped off. You're going to do an action today'. So we said, 'Oh yeah, right, that must be later'. We sat round laughing at them all day. We didn't need to do an action any more, and they couldn't go away because they thought we were coming back' (Kerris, at the M65, in Evans, 1988:46).**

**Similar experiences were had at Ashton Court. In the early days, off-the-cuff actions often led to the entire quarry operation being shut down for the day, and lead to the acquisition of £49 000 worth of security guards per week (financed by Pioneer, the quarry company, thus decreasing their apparently limited profit margin for the operation). Over time, actions could be prompted often literally at the drop of a hat, and security were routinely alerted by activists merely 'bimbling'<sup>12</sup> around.**

**'went for a bimble, looked suspicious to annoy security and we got 4(!) guards plus a landrover to follow us on our walk around Ashton Court' (Appendix I:15)**

**'Easter Day: at about 2 oclock we decide to make our way to the quarry gates. About 1/4 stay and site sit. Noone really knows whats going on. We decide the thing to do is to creep up the side of the complex and get inside thru a fence, break thru any guards, but hopefully they wont realise we'll be coming since they were expecting us yesterday...' (Appendix I:3)**

**The organisation of street parties is also indicative of the way EDA events seem to take on a life of their own. During my participation at the West Country Activist gathering it came to light that a previous RTS party in Bristol (which I attended) was planned by merely a few people who chose the date and time of the action, and the meeting place. Once people had congregated, the organisers led them off to the planned destination (the M32). However, as I experienced, the spontaneous movement of the crowd took the party away from this planned destination, and towards the local railway station, where it began across a road junction (which had the effect of closing the main road artery through Bristol for two hours). Thus through this form of 'disorganisation', the objective of EDA was made manifest: autonomous individuals came together and spontaneously interacted as a collective to take place.**

**'It might have looked like any other street riot...but behind it lay a new sophistication. The police will find it hard to prevent it happening again' (Leading article, The Guardian, 1999:29).**

**The spontaneous and disorderly approach to EDA can function on larger scales than the local street party due to the noted networks of alternative zines, virtual sites and lines of oral communication that help to sustain the movement. The 'dis'- or 'self'- organisation experienced in the physical spaces of EDA is replicated in the other EDA spaces, and these synergistically**

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<sup>12</sup> 'Bimble: to go for a walk or wander around aimlessly' (Evans, 1998:76).



combine to co-ordinate street parties that can bring whole areas of major cities to a standstill. (An example of this was the 'Carnival against Capitalism' in the City of London in 1999, to which the above quotation alludes. Other examples include pan-European actions, including the G8 protests in July, 1998, and actions co-ordinated across North America, including the N30/WTO protests in Seattle (see Clark & Rhodes, 1999<sup>13</sup>).

However, the disorganised nature of EDA can also lead to a number of negative consequences for campaigns. For example, on one occasion at Ashton Court an activist got drunk and decided to climb up a piece of quarry machinery. At 60 foot up off the ground, she decided to stop. Three fire engines were called out to remove her, and since it was on a Sunday, no quarry workings were impeded. Such events merely inconvenienced the fire brigade, rather than Pioneer or Pinkertons security directly, and gave an anti-EDA story to the media. It is clear, therefore, that in any form of organisation where individuals are their own leaders, even when they share the same cultural preferences, some individuals are going to make bad choices.

As stated above, the potential for self-organisation in EDA is allied to the possibility of organisational disintegration, or the formalisation of organisational structure. During my research I came across one EDA group who chose to adopt a more rigid, fossilised form of organisational structure rather than the disorganisational mode. As a 'Voice from Earth First!' revealed, the alternative video producers 'Undercurrents' structured themselves as a hierarchical business along relatively conventional capitalist lines<sup>14</sup>. It concluded that,

'Undercurrents have been quietly working as a (fairly) exclusive news agency..., [and it] can only profit in this way because its actual methods of operation radically contradicts what we feel is most activists' perception of the organisation. That unless there is a large scale change within the organisation activists should begin to view it very much as they do mainstream media organisations' (Voices from Earth First!, 1998:5).

Many EDA-ers thus appear to concur with Michael Albert when he states,

'what makes alternative media alternative can't be its product in the simplest sense. [It] can't just mean that the institution's editorial focus is in this or that topical area; being alternative must have to do with how the institution is organised and works' (1997:22).

The importance of a disorganised structure, defined by the absence of coercive authority and

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<sup>13</sup>As Clark & Rhodes (1999) cite, London police informed the FBI about a number of RTS activists who were travelling to Seattle for the N30 action against the World Trade Organisation with the intent of helping to 'dis'organise the protests.

<sup>14</sup> An activist revealed that, 'Undercurrents contracts ask contributors to waive all moral rights to their work; the contract asked contributors to sign exclusive rights over to Undercurrents for between 20 and 25 years; the contract demands contributors agree to promote the video in any possible way in order to widen distribution; That the majority of money from the sale of footage (70% after all costs have been taken) remains within Undercurrents instead of being offered back to the campaign that produced the images in the first place' (Voices from Earth First, 1998:12).



hierarchical relations of power, can be seen therefore to be of immense significance to EDA. (Indeed, they are so important that a few months after the expose of Undercurrents' working practices, it decided to discontinue its operation within the EDA movement and ceased to function as an alternative video service.) Although this form of (dis)organisation is inherently risky: EDA groups, spaces and actions can disintegrate into pure chaos through reliance on this structure, EDA's ethos of individual autonomy insists that this risk must be taken. If it is not, EDA simply recreates the values and structure of 'modern' society, and fails to invoke its own cultural preferences. If the risk is run, and it pays off, the interaction within and between the various spaces and networks of EDA provide innovative and dynamic consequences for environmental resistance.

As noted above, the 'disorganised' structure of EDA has been described by some as 'organic' in nature (see Lee, 1995). Indeed, many writers who have influenced environmental thought have relied on ecological and organic analogies to make their points (for example Henry David Thoreau, see <http://www.library.ucsb.edu/depts/thoreau/theoreau.html>, and Peter Kropotkin, see <http://www.pitzer.edu/~dward>). Zakin's research on American Earth First! discovered activists themselves utilising similar analogies;

'A good metaphor, we [Dave Foreman and Nancy Morton, founders of US EF!] think, for Earth First! over the last decade is that of a generalist species in a new habitat with many available niches...oftentimes, external environmental stresses push a generalist species toward faster differentiation into separate, specifically adapted sister species. This is what is happening to us in Earth First! Those given to better exploiting the different niches of monkeywrenching, direct action, and conservation biology have been diverging...' (Zakin, 1993:413).

Although some have remarked upon the impropriety of applying ecological analogies to resistance<sup>15</sup>, an illuminating perspective on EDA can be gained if we explore Lewis Mumford's suggestion that, 'all thinking worthy of the name must now be ecological' (in Porritt, 1984:220). I feel that many of the characteristics of EDA's community and culture can be illustrated using one ecological analogy in particular: Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the 'rhizome' (1987)<sup>16</sup>. Botanically, a rhizome is an underground portion of a stem, producing shoots on top and roots beneath; it is different from a root in that it has buds, nodes, and scaly leaves. As Lim (1996) states, Deleuze and Guattari use the notion of 'rhizome' as a figurative term to describe non-hierarchical networks of all kinds. A short discussion follows on how EDA communities and culture can be conceived of in 'rhizomatic' terms.

'[In a rhizome] there is *no hierarchy*... the perception of connectivity is initiated by

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<sup>15</sup> Mike Roselle (of U.S. Earth First!) said, 'I think we should be careful about using biology to understand human things. It's like using the Bible to expound on politics' (in Zakin, 1993:413).

<sup>16</sup>The notion of the rhizome was used by activists themselves in Do or Die (1999) to characterise the 'desire' which motivates much EDA.



you, and is, therefore, a decentralising principle. At any given moment the 'centre' is the individual's position' (from <http://cs.art.rmit.edu.au/>).

As illustrated at Ashton Court, EDA communities have no rigid hierarchy. This is a conscious move as its presence would replicate the oppression and control perceived to characterise the liberal democratic system. In its stead, a system of mutual appreciation and tolerance is sought (although not always attained). This objective complements one of the defining elements of EDA, that of 'personal responsibility'. Through autonomy and reflexivity (after Cox, 1999) activists attempt to take personal responsibility to both resist enclosure and also instil positive alternatives through practical action. This form of organisation closely aligns itself with the principles of anarchy, but whether this system is consciously adopted is open to question. EDA communities thus maintain self-organisation through 'consensus and custom' (after Snyder, 1990), this occurs through group networking and communicating (in all their virtual and actual forms), thus contributing to a pattern of ritual practice which establishes and maintains a viable, but evolving, system.

The above quotation also alludes to an individual's position being at any point the 'centre' of a rhizome. This point can perhaps be seen to lead to some individuals' valorising their own ecosophy, action, or position, over those of others (thus leading to the nature of criticism received through the virtual questionnaire, and noted in Chapter Five). Awareness thus needs to be maintained of the decentralising principle that creates the space for individuals to exercise their own chosen 'action'.

'Unlike others, tap-roots do not have to work hierarchically - from the root, to the stem, the fruit, the seeds and back to the roots, a distinct cyclic formula' (from <http://cs.art.rmit.edu.au/>).

EDA communities also can be seen to work like tap-roots. Whether the protest site, media source, campaign 'myth' or individual activist is focused on, each has the ability to inspire, educate and empower other forms of action that both contribute to and become further elements of EDA communities. In rhizomatic terms therefore, all elements of EDA are like tubers (such as potatoes): they have the ability to 'give birth' to more tubers. In each act of resistance is a seed that could germinate and grow into a new tactic or EDA space.

'Though the subjects appears to be individual, they 'assume a strong unity', supporting sub-texts (or secondary roots), in its growing pattern. [This] forms the rhizomatic structure of: one = many' (ibid).

Due to the non-hierarchical, root-like network, EDA communities cannot be entered and exited at one distinct point. As earlier chapters have noted, individuals are moved to participate in action due to a range of political and pragmatic motivations, and as the section on the Internet literally illustrates, journeys through EDA are inherently personal and often somewhat arbitrary.



This complex and multi-faceted nature of EDA thus provides various 'nodes' and entryways from which individuals can cultivate connections with an array of political issues. EDA has thus grown into a political community that cannot be defined in terms of single issues. The 'environment' related to EDA has become 'cross fertilised' with social and ecological notions, by human and non-human networks.

'A rhizome doesn't begin and doesn't end, but is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:5).

EDA is in constant flux. As a process it takes numerous forms, and is constantly evolving. EDA-ers themselves are also changing, both in terms of their awareness and knowledge, but also in terms of their location. Complementing the ideas associated with third space, individuals change their identities as they inhabit different spaces. For example, by entering a physical space of EDA for a cup of tea, one is stepping into an autonomous zone, and practising an act of resistance. In the case of Ashton Court, one literal step into Craggy Island metamorphosed that individual (in the eyes of Pinkerton's security at least) from a member of the public enjoying a recreational walk, to a 'protester' (and as we will see in a later section, a dangerous 'criminal'). The importance of location to EDA is therefore crucial: as Maxey states, the direct action attitude is to 'do what you can from *where* you are' (1999). Since individuals' locations are always changing, always 'intermezzo', it is important that attention is not focused solely on the most visible spaces of EDA, but on the resistance practices going on elsewhere.

Complementing this point, the notion of the rhizome can also be seen to be appropriate when considering the methodology used to study EDA: i.e. the creation of a third (academic) space. Through attempting to move away from dominant modes of academic investigation, and thus seeking to break down the dualistic domains of academic and activist, the notion of third space creates a temporary and evolving 'niche' from which EDA can be configured in new ways. In a sense, it enables a form of resistance to be practised through adapting dominant modes of academic inquiry that can be seen to be a form of enclosure (denying as they do the passionate, the involved, and the political aspects of research).

Rhizomatic EDA communities therefore 'self-organise', they have an ability to generate new systems within the constraints of, as well as be constituent components of, larger systems. Due to this complexity and diversity, as well as their ever-evolving nature, they elude liberal atomistic analysis, being as they are beyond conventional enclosed categories. Their at once coherent and paradoxical nature, their simplicity as well as their complexity, mark their transcendence of the monotheistic nature of the modern liberal system.



**EDA & the liberal democratic backlash.**

**'I think one has to know that if you are being effective, there will be a backlash. In fact, that backlash is occurring is a tribute to the environmental movement, because it shows it is making a difference' (Shiva, in Rowell, 1996:4).**

**'I think that the state is becoming more and more paranoid because it is starting to realise that people have less and less faith in it and don't believe in it or recognise its worth - and therefore they need to bolster themselves up at every opportunity and they'll do that by new legislation and clamping down on those they consider to be a threat - and we are a threat to them...' (Del, RTS in Bagguley & Hearn, 1999:73).**

**We have seen that EDA marks an attempt to challenge and move beyond the cultural preferences of liberal modernity and invoke new environmental preferences. How can the success of these attempts be judged? The perspective I take here is to examine the ways in which the liberal democratic state has used its powers to counter EDA. As Shiva notes (above) and McKay (1996:161) argues, it is only when cultures of resistance begin to have an effect that the state will use its various powers to attempt to control them<sup>17</sup>. The last section of this chapter thus looks at the significance of EDA through examining the measures taken by the liberal democratic state in order to counter it. This will be achieved through focusing on the different spaces of EDA in turn.**

**At the physical spaces of EDA at Ashton Court, the newly created action camps were treated with a degree of ambiguity by the local organ of the state, the Bristol City Council. The BCC responded to the creation of politicised public space through issuing a warning letter to protesters, this stated;**

**'You are trespassing on the City Council's land, camping in this location has not been authorised and should not continue'.**

**In line with the arguments made in Chapter Two on public space simulacra, this letter made it apparent that the Council perceived it was they who owned the land, and that through taking place for political purposes, the campaigners were infringing the rules laid out for the use of this space. The letter made it plain that because the activists had not gained the Council's authorisation for living on the land, the camps were illegitimate and should be vacated. However, from informal chats with council employees, it became clear that the BCC were unlikely to actively evict the campaigners. This course of action would have involved a**

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**<sup>17</sup>This view complements that stated in Chapter Two by The Ecologist (1993:70); to reiterate, 'those who remain on the margins of the new mainstream, either by choice or because that is where society has pushed them, are... perceived as a threat.... Their protests are classed as subversive and a threat to political stability. Because they are perceived as a threat, they become objects to be controlled, the legitimate subjects of further enclosure.'**



considerable cost, and the Council deemed that this ought to be paid for by Pioneer. (Pioneer on the other hand, felt that any eviction cost would fall upon the BCC as it was their land being squatted by activists. This argument between the BCC and Pioneer over cost and responsibility benefited campaigners as the consequence was that no eviction occurred. The EDA-ers had indeed profited from inhabiting a space where power relationships are never certain, complete or free from fragmentation (after Bhabha, 1994)). Thus although the BCC deemed the activists to be challenging the Council's authority, they did not deem this challenge to be significant enough to warrant a costly eviction. The Council's view towards the activists was therefore somewhat ambiguous: the letter delivered to activists was clearly little more than a 'paper tiger' - it constituted an empty threat to vacate the physical spaces of EDA at Ashton Court, yet what were the motives behind this course of action? Was this course of action due to the fact that the BCC did not deem the activists to be directly challenging their authority (the issue exclusively concerned Pioneer and the EDA-ers), or were the BCC aware of the campaigners challenge, but could not afford to deal with it? A third alternative can also be raised; the Council may have been aware that the EDA-ers' protest could be emasculated in a number of other less costly ways, as the following sections demonstrate.

"We don't mind if these people protest just so long as they keep within the law' appears to be the standard police comment. Which conveniently ignores the fact that nearly all protest which doesn't have the prior permission of the police is outside the law" (Evans, 1988:180).

Although, as earlier chapters outlined, there are a number of deficits in liberal democracy, British citizens have always enjoyed the right to peaceful protest. This right, as the European Commission states, is a 'fundamental right', and one of the 'foundations of democratic society' (from Liberty, 1994). In 1994, this 'fundamental right' was abolished in Britain through the cross-party approval of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994). The CJA introduced a raft of new regulations that affected alternative lifestyles (see McKay, 1996 & Rowell, 1996), but most significantly in light of this thesis, altered the status of peaceful protest. The CJA redefined peaceful protest by changing it from a civil to a criminal offence. In the view of Liberty, the CJA, 'criminalised legitimate forms of dissent, undermined peaceful public protest and breached international human rights law' (Liberty, 1994). In redefining peaceful protest in this way, the liberal democratic state can be seen to have narrowed further the avenues through which citizens can effectively articulate their political identities. If individuals now wish to question democratic deficits through public assembly or peaceful protest, they risk obtaining a criminal record.

The police arrive [at an action to stop the erection of a 'cage' around the meadow]. They warn us that we are deterring legal activity from occurring and if we don't leave now they'll charge us with aggravated trespass. We have to leave this and adjacent land. It's the widest



possible interpretation of the law. Only 2 guys are 'working', 50 yards from where we are. When cops arrived the workers had stopped so there was no proof we had done anything. Is being on public land an unlawful activity too? Detering work? Adjacent land? They threaten 'bee' on camera with section 69 - 3 month off site if carried out. This will happen if we won't leave. We leave.

Scott says later S.69 is a surprise move on their part. Its worse than bailing off site and arrest: that is over in a month. This interpretation really hamstrings protest; any sort of move to stop fence at the mo will be hampered by security, warned/ 69'd/ arrested by police. (Appendix I:34)

**As the above diary excerpt notes, the significance of the CJA was made manifest at Ashton Court when the police invoked its Sections numbered 68 and 69. SchNEWS outlines the meaning of these sections of the CJA;**

**'To be charged under Section 68 you have to be trespassing on open private land and the lawful activity has to be happening or about to happen on that land. You have to do something to try to obstruct or disrupt the activity, or intimidate the people to stop them carrying out the lawful activity (e.g. lying in front of a tree to stop the chainsaws). You can be done under Section 69 if you refuse to leave the land (or if you return within 3 months) after police have asked you to, because they 'reasonably believe' you have committed, are committing, or intend to commit section 68' (SchNEWS Survival Guide, 1999:57).**

**Although Sections 68 & 69 of the CJA related to 'open private land' it was clear that the police interpreted this clause in the widest possible sense (as the above diary extract outlines). As a result, these sections restricted the majority of actions at Ashton Court. Actions would occur to inconvenience and attempt to stop the meadow being fenced in, but only until the police arrived and threatened arrest under the above sections. The stringent bail conditions generally imposed when activists are arrested under these clauses deterred the majority from forcing the police's hand.**

**As implied by the above section, one of the major implications of the Criminal Justice Act for EDA was the politicising effect it had on the police force. Police officers now did not simply implement the law, they also had the power to judge intent. Due to the CJA, a police officer has the discretion to judge whether individuals may or may not be going to commit Section 68. In other words, an individual can be arrested without actually having committed an offence, it is enough for the police to believe that they are going to commit an offence. This discretionary potential had direct effect at Ashton Court as activists were arrested for simply walking across the meadow. However, as a result of this process, the police found it difficult to charge activists with offences that would withstand legal scrutiny in court<sup>18</sup>.**

**The redefinition of peaceful protest through the CJA can be seen therefore to be an example**



of the government of the day attempting to further control the accepted channels of dissent. As noted by Ghazi (1994) in Chapter One, a senior Whitehall source suggested that the CJA had been kept sufficiently broad to ensure EDA fell within its mandate. It could be posited therefore that elected representatives felt the rise in EDA was significant enough at this stage to try to 'nip it in the bud'. It was perhaps hoped that the criminalisation of peaceful protest would deter further numbers from becoming involved; as Denham (one of the few Labour MPs who spoke out the CJA) states,

'[The CJA] has everything to do with intimidating others from taking part in any form of protest' (In Rowell, 1996:337).

However, as McKay (1996, 1998) notes, and voices from within the EDA movement have demonstrated (Voices from Earth First!, 1996, 1997, 1998), the CJA had little effect in deterring more and more individuals from getting involved in direct action. Indeed, it seemed that the Act had the consequence of unifying a somewhat disparate set of counter cultural movements, rather than dividing them. Perhaps due to the inability of the CJA to successfully counter EDA further pieces of legislation have been introduced through the powers of the liberal democratic state. The Security Services Act (1996) is one of these legislative acts. Pertinent sections of the act are worded as follows;

'Section 4. It shall also be the function of the[Security] Service to act in support of the activities of police forces and other law enforcement agencies in the prevention and detection of serious crime.

Section 3b. Conduct is [deemed to be 'serious crime' if it constitutes one or more offences, and either:

- If it involves the use of violence
- it results in substantial financial gain, or;
- it is conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose' (from Lodge, 1999).

As illustrated by the above excerpt, any conduct 'by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose' is now defined as a 'serious crime'. EDA in the form of action camps, street parties, or gatherings clearly falls within such a classification. As a result of this definition such activities can now be monitored not only by the police, but also by security forces (including MI5 and anti-terrorist squads). As a consequence of this re-classification of EDA, further forms of legislation can be enacted to control activists' behaviour. The Prevention of Terrorism Act (1994), for example, now has added significance for EDA-ers. This Act allows police the power to stop and search anyone without reasonable suspicion for a period of up to 28 days in 'designated areas'. If the individual refuses to be searched they can be put in prison for up to

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<sup>18</sup> As a result of this, some activists were charged with being in possession of a penknife. This instrument was deemed to be an offensive weapon that could be used to break Section 68.



six months. As SchNEWS reports, one of the few MPs who voted against the legislation commented that if this is what democracy was about, 'we might as well go home' (in SchNEWS Issue 68, @www.schnews.org/uk)<sup>19</sup>. The following comment from an activist at Ashton Court expresses many EDA-ers' views on these new legal definitions;

**'Its like when that Native American woman came to site and said, 'I can't believe how oppressed you people are, how controlled you are', and that kind of gives you a shock, cos you do live under the illusion that you live in a free country and then someone says you're so oppressed. And you think, and go 'yes we are!'. When you think of the Criminal Justice Act, and the way its being used, and the fact that MI5 are watching environmental protesters, calling you a terrorist because you're against the state, because the state is doing something wrong. It's scary. People in Birmingham had their camps raided before the G8 summit under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and its like 'why?' Has anyone from a camp ever gone and thrown a bomb at somebody? There are people that are just totally destroying the planet, and you are a terrorist if you oppose it. What better way can I use my life than by opposing that? But I don't want to spend it all in prison though hahaha!' (Activist Interview, see Appendix V).**

The new 'catch-all' classifications of 'serious crime' and 'peaceful protest' introduced by the organs of the liberal democratic state can be seen to have legitimated a stronger stance against EDA. One of the most explicit aspects of this less tolerant attitude towards counter-hegemonic political practices is the rise in 'surveillance'. When attending an action or protest camp it is likely that individuals will be filmed by security guards or the police; if arrival is by car then vehicle registration will be noted, and these details will be kept on file, irrespective of whether arrest for an offence occurs. From my experience, such surveillance is particularly effective on day actions when local individuals, or those new to EDA, decide to get involved. For example, at the Anniversary action at the Newbury Bypass, many 'Middle Englanders' (including my parents) thought twice about attending the demonstration when confronted by police operating film cameras both on the ground and from helicopters, and their details being logged by the local constabulary<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> The Terrorism Bill currently being passed through government widens the definition of terrorism from political causes to include religious or ideological causes, and the definition of violence to include violent action against property as well as people (see Dyer, 2000). The Bill's new definitions clearly include EDA-ers, and if passed, means activists could be, 'held and interrogated for a week without being charged or given access to lawyers, lesser right than someone who sets out to murder or maim' (Vidal, 2000:4).

<sup>20</sup> An activist's friend in the US recently was allowed to obtain her own FBI file which had been compiled since she took out a library book on Marxism as a student. In her file her friends from the time had been 'blacklisted', and with this new information it became clear why these individuals were never allowed to take up teaching positions in the USA. This anecdote although potentially exaggerated is nonetheless worrying for British activists since UK and US security forces now share information on EDA (see Clark & Rhodes, 1999). See Figure 6:2.



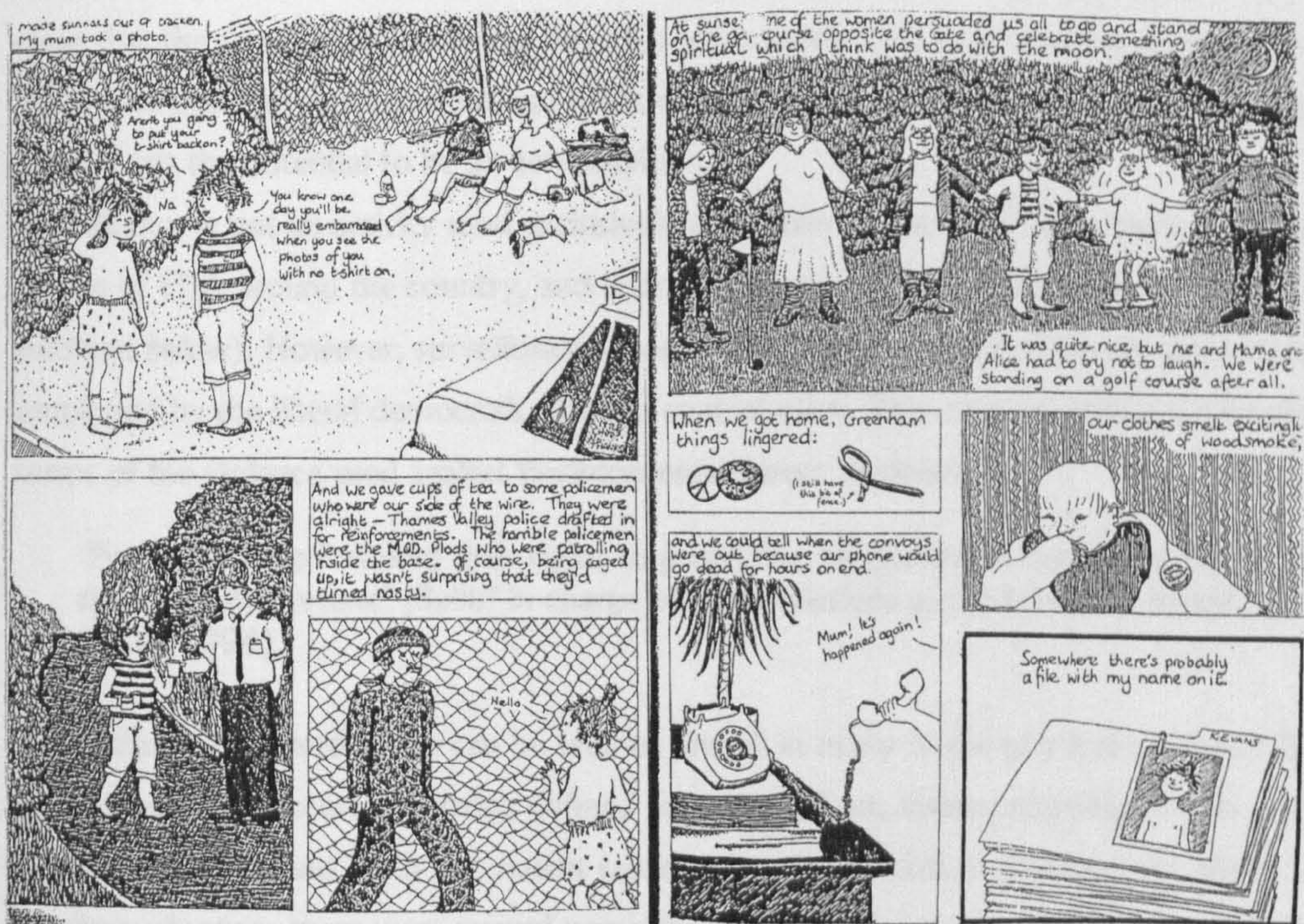


Figure 6:2. Evans' 'memory myth' of her time as a child at the Greenham Common peace camp (1998:14).

Camera surveillance was experienced constantly at the physical spaces of Ashton Court, and was successful in having an intimidatory effect. When it was thought that 'ecotage' had been caught on video camera, this sometimes affected that individual's motivation to continue action on site. This appeared dependent on previous convictions and the seriousness of the 'crime', also in some cases the subsequent effects the action may have on the camp itself. In one case, an activist decided it was better to move on to a site in the Midlands, rather than risk potential arrest at Ashton Court<sup>21</sup>. The intimidatory nature of surveillance is effective even if individuals are acting in a strictly legal manner. On one occasion at Ashton Court, a number of individuals decided to spend the summer afternoon having their lunch on the meadow. Throughout proceedings a security guard filmed the event (which ironically turned into a discussion on the legal rights of activists vis-à-vis the security forces). During discussion it occurred to us that the footage being collated as we spoke could be used as evidence to 'prove' we were conspiring to conduct an action that had yet to occur (in the same way as the 'Gandalf' defendants had been, as outlined below). As a result of this situation, one individual went up to the security camera-man and shouted into the camera that he was not a 'criminal' but a 'member of the

<sup>21</sup> At the time of this incident the spectre of an activist with the group 'Mendip Hills not Holes' being jailed for 7 years for getting his mobile confiscated (thus being able to be traced for incitement) hung over the camp. This led to activists becoming more cautious in the risks taken with the law.



public having a picnic with his friends!' In terms of evidence gathering against individuals, it was clear that the security guards filmed anyone on the public land near the quarry regardless of activity or age: this in itself is perhaps evidence that in the minds of the security forces at least, anyone has the potential to be an eco-activist.

Surveillance is not an activity used exclusively at Ashton Court, it has been used in numerous spaces of EDA around the country, and is practised extensively in the virtual spaces of EDA (as outlined below). However, surveillance is not the only visible aspect of the stronger stance employed by the liberal democratic state to control EDA. This stronger stance is also visible in terms of the violence used against Environmental Direct Activists.

'Protesters have forfeited their rights to protection by the law as they are authors of their own misfortune' (Balliff in charge of EDA evictions at the Newbury bypass, in Vidal, 1996).

The attitude expressed above can be seen to prevail in many of the physical spaces of EDA. Due to peaceful protest now being defined as a criminal act, those enforcing the law see EDA-ers as 'fair game', and often use violent tactics to ensure the law is enforced. As noted in previous chapters, there were several instances at Ashton Court where security guards attacked EDA-ers, on one particularly nasty occasion one female activist was physically threatened with rape by a security guard. My diary recalls some of the violent incidents I experienced;

it only gets dodgy when the contractors (two guys and a spade!) turn up. one gets larey with me - threatens me, whizzes the spade down within a whisker of my foot and throws a big stone which hits me on the thumb (whilst I'm on my hands and knees filling in his holes). But he's one guy and there are loads of us. We carry on and fill the holes in until the police arrive (I:35)

noticed 2 helmets [security] passing by - decided to go and tease them - 1 red hat, one yellow [different statuses(!)]. Dan tried to nick the grey haired one's hat - but the other guy (the one who pressure pointed bee on sunday) all of a sudden violently swung at dan with his helmet, obviously not trying to hit him, but the effect was VERY intimidating and quite shocking - a sledgehammer motion about a foot from his head. Shit. (Appendix I:14)

last few days since sunday have got really larey - the security been told to up the aggression, people have been getting punched and kicked, verbally abused for just walking across the meadow, bizarre since police are so totally on their side, they're there in half an hour if security call them, they have so many security for so little fence, and we are so vulnerable all the time, ribbons as our defences and that's it - so they are upping the ante since the fence is going up - the last few nights they have been coming in with loud hailer all through the night, so weird cos theres this guy with a loud hailer swearing and effing and blinding at us coming out of the pitch black, devilish voices, whistles, very weird - at once humourous cos its clear we're getting to them, but at the same time quite scarey if its pushed too far, if they come into camp etc. The third time they came into the camp last night I became really awake, sensed that something was going to happen, they come up to



my bender, its quite exposed, away from the others and the firepit, and they start rattling the tarps, but you dont know what to say cos 'gren' and 'nissan' rose to it earlier and then they know that its getting to you and itll come back worse at you, so I dont say anything, they say 'is anyone in there' and I reply 'yeah I am', so they say, 'right we'll give you a wake up call then' and you hear them take a few steps back, and you're lying on the ground in the foetus position cos you've just been sleeping and its dark and what light there is useless cos you havent got your glasses on, and, so after their few steps you hear them run and you and they run straight thru, up and onto the bender collapsing it, and you, under the weight of the guard. So I'm right underneath this and can feel it all. They get up, laugh and say right same time tomorrow then. You think fuck!

The tents fucked, they're laughing and you're glad it was no worse. But you think you're so vulnerable, no protection whatsoever, they can come in and do whatever they want with little comeback - threaten, destroy, physically abuse, its scary. Could've been seriously injured I supposed, pretty galling.

Its okay to say if they get violent then we're winning, but then the reality is that people are going to be seriously hurt and that shocks you - job mentality, they can make it as rough as they want to. There are no rules. You become aware of your own physical fragility - small consolation that you're morally right if you're physically f\*cked about' (Appendix I:25)

**Similar stories, most of them far more serious, are told about most of the physical spaces of EDA in this country (see, for example, the case of 'Yellow Wednesday' at Twyford Down (Anderson, 1995), Evans' account of the M11 eviction (1998:44), the evictions at Bangor in Wales (see Warwick, 1998), and Merrick's account of Newbury (1998). It seems to be increasingly the case that despite the rules and regulations governing security forces and their treatment of protesters, due to the fact that such individuals are now 'criminals', on many occasions such rules to protect human rights are overlooked.**

**It is clear therefore that due to the recent re-classifications of eco-action, the new legal powers conferred to the police, and the renewed political will to exercise them, many actions in the physical spaces of EDA can now be effectively controlled by the liberal state. One activist's comment at the 1998 Bristol RTS party (as the police began to arrest individuals one by one) was particularly revealing on this point, he stated; 'This is so predictable, the police can easily control these events now!' (Appendix I:37). It could be argued therefore that the liberal democratic state has been able to 'legally intimidate' (after Rowell, 1996:347) many individuals through the infringement of their civil liberties, the threat of arrest, and the risk of physical injury. It can be argued that these processes have been relatively successful in scaring a number of individuals thinking of questioning the democratic deficits of liberal democracy into inaction.**

**However, the liberal democratic state does not only seek to counter EDA in the physical spaces of action, but also in the virtual arenas of protest. As stated in an earlier chapter, due to the**



fact that anyone with a PC and relevant attachments can access the Internet, activists have no control over who reads web-sites or email bulletin boards. The inherent ease with which information can be accessed on the Web thus ensures that very little new legislation is necessary in order to monitor EDA activity; as Agee (a former CIA agent) states,

'The Internet offers intelligence agencies an amazing potential source for information collection and for monitoring the activities of their targets. They not only can plug into communications through the names of senders and receivers of e-mail, but also through keyword monitoring of messages as they have done for many years. If you add e-mail to their monitoring of telephone and other credit card transactions, they can get a very complete picture of a given person's activities' (in Brandt, <http://www.eco-action.org/dt/bb.html>).

Activists are well aware of the ease with which security forces can monitor Internet communication, as Road Alert!'s warning to virtual activists suggests;

'A word about Internet security: unless you are sending an encrypted E-mail to someone you trust, assume that EVERYTHING you put out on the Internet is completely 'in the open', and will be read by the authorities' (1997:64).

Even the encrypted email cannot ensure privacy in the virtual world. The British government is seeking to intercept such encrypted messages on grounds that they may be criminal. As Bamber (1997) reports, the police will be able to intercept private emails without obtaining a warrant under a new agreement being finalised with Internet providers. Because the laws on interception were drawn before emails were widely used, the police do not need to obtain individual warrants to read the correspondence (although other monitoring activities such as telephone tapping needs Home Office approval). As Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, states, 'We are using 19th century procedures to pursue 21st century criminals' (in Bamber, 1997).

It is clear therefore that the liberal state is attempting to control the role for resistance that the Internet can represent (they are attempting to control its 'emancipatory potential' (after (Aronowitz et al, 1996:171)). Through a process that could perhaps be called 'virtual intimidation' it is apparent that any form of virtual communication is likely to be monitored, intercepted or recorded by the authorities, and subsequently used against both the sender and receiver. Although very few arrests have been made to date involving virtual evidence, one can speculate that if such cases multiply it will lead to activists seriously considering the utility of discussing, informing or disseminating information on EDA through the Internet.

As stated in previous chapters, the alternative media functions as a mechanism to make good the fourth deficit of liberal democracy: it is a means through which interested parties can acquire information on Environmental Direct Action that would not be reported through the mainstream media. However, it can be argued that the liberal democratic state has attempted to limit and control (i.e. enclose) the alternative media, and thus retain this democratic deficit.



One good example of this is the 'Gandalf' case. In this case, five journalists associated with the 'Green Anarchist' and the 'Animal Liberation Front' were arrested and charged with 'conspiracy to incite person or persons unknown to commit criminal damage'. This charge was based on the reportage of EDA that the five individuals had separately published. During the case the 'Gandalf 5' were not charged in relation to any specific criminal damage, there was no evidence on who had been incited, or when the alleged criminal damage had occurred. Furthermore, it could not be proven that the accused had ever met before, or knew of each other's existence. At the trial's end the 'Gandalf 5' were found 'guilty by association' of inciting persons unknown to commit actions unknown. Three of the defendants were sentenced to three years in jail, whilst the other two were held on remand. This is how Green Anarchist reported the case;

### **'GANDALF IN COURT'**

**CONSPIRACY:** People who have never met, people who attended the same rally but never spoke, someone who received a 9 second phone call, who bought an ALF T shirt, people who never knew of each others' existence are all linked. It is not what you said in that innocent letter, but the fact that you wrote it at all. The whole concept of conspiracy depends upon guilt by association. Welcome to the police state suckers!

**INCITEMENT:** GA is not responsible for the fact that people take @ction. Animal abuse itself is the reason ALF actions take place. When we report on road protests, our reports are not the cause, the destruction of the countryside by roadbuilders is. Nothing we say forces people into activity. No-one is compelled to buy Green Anarchist. 'Anarchism is about thinking for yourselves' as it said on the GA blurb.

**THIS AFFECTS YOU:** It is inevitable that techniques and legal shit used in [this case] will be used against other radical publications or groups. Eventually, if that carries on, all the radical media channels will be rolled up. If you have any interest in freedom, you'd better start protesting against this now! Today Green Anarchist, tomorrow it could be you...

**THE ONLY CURE FOR THE STATE:** The whole point of the Gandalf prosecution is to intimidate the movement into inactivity. Protesters who do nothing are no threat to the system. So it is important that we refuse to be frightened. They want to silence alternative news so that the only way you can find things out is through their state-controlled media, if at all. The answer here is to carry on reporting the facts. The truth is no offence! In the end it doesn't matter what happens to GA. There will be other publications, better theories, better analysis. A zine is just a zine but the revolution is for keeps. Keep on kicking, and together we'll smash civilization yet!

(Extracts from Green Anarchist #49).

SchNEWS reported the case as follows;

**'WE WON'T SHUT UP!'**

**JAILLED EDITORS FREED! \* BRAKES PUT ON CORPORATE GREED!**

In the week that The Sun began a national campaign to free the fictional Weatherfield One - Coronation Street's Dierdre - a conspiratorial silence greeted the sensational release of



three UK editors jailed last November. High Court Appeal Judge, Mr Justice Smedley, shocked a court on Friday by signing the papers for their immediate release - effectively undermining the original ruling - just four months into their three year sentence.

The journalists, branded 'terrorists', had been jailed for reporting the facts of direct action protests. Although the three maintain they didn't even know each other, they were found guilty of 'conspiring to incite persons unknown' on unspecified dates over a five year period to commit unspecified criminal damage. Hello, Orwell?

The release of the GANDALF 3 is important to SchNEWS. It sends a signal that the underground press cannot be silenced, and shows why the underground press is so important. (We were the first to report on the trial, the jailing and the release of the three UK editors). It's a strong reason why we should continue. But we can't without your help. We are victims of our own success and we need office help before we drown in news! Even if you can only spend an hour a week (we can train you), writing & phoning it'd save some poor scribes from an early grave. Thanks. That's all. You can read the funny bits now'

(SchNEWS, Issue161, @www.schnews.org.uk).

It is not, however, just the alternative media that feels it has been intimidated into silence on EDA by the liberal democratic state. During the campaigns against Manchester's second runway and the Newbury bypass, the mainstream media felt it was prevented from reporting EDA. At Manchester the journalist Nick Cobbing was arrested for taking photos of tree evictions<sup>22</sup>. As Cobbing stated, 'The [police] took my cameras and film and held me in a van at the site for two hours. Then they drove me to Salford police station where I was held for another 12 hours' (McCann, 1997). By the time Cobbing was bailed - on condition that he did not return to the site and that he stayed in his London home every night - no newspapers could use his pictures of the arrests and so none appeared. The reaction to this, and similar cases, by the National Union of Journalists was expressed by their spokesperson Tim Gopsill;

'For a policeman to arrest a journalist while he is doing his job can only mean his intention is to stop the protest being reported' (*The Journalist* magazine, 1998:9).

Similar incidents occurred at the Newbury bypass evictions. *Guardian* journalist John Vidal was 'harassed', 'physically obstructed', 'threatened with arrest', and 'formally warned' for attempting to report the evictions<sup>23</sup>. Vidal himself asks:

'Why are the authorities trying to massage the news coverage of Newbury? What right

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<sup>22</sup> Cobbing was charged with 'the obstruction of sheriff's officers' (see McCann, 1997).

<sup>23</sup> The new Terrorism Bill currently passing through the House of Commons encloses journalist's investigative freedom further. The Bill states that the media would have a legal obligation to inform on EDA-ers due to the latter's new classification as terrorists. As the Society of Editors state, 'The Bill will extend state powers, outlaw journalistic investigation and bolster state secrecy' (see Dyer, 2000:4).



has an Andover solicitor [the under-Sheriff Nicholas Blandy] to dictate to the world's media what they...should see when men in his pay are being accused of assault and worse? Why will Blandy not allow trained, independent legal observers and the press into his security cordon, especially when there is a growing catalogue of alleged human rights abuses and complaints against chainsaw operators, guards, climbers and others. Why is it impossible to interview protesters during or immediately after the eviction?' (1996:9).

One can see that the liberal democratic state has used intimidation in the form of legislation, surveillance, physical violence, conspiracy charges and arrest to attempt to control eco-action in the physical, virtual and media spaces of EDA. At a basic level this control can be seen in terms of the re-definition of resistance. The re-classification of peaceful protest from a civil to a criminal offence has had the effect of introducing a new division into the space of political articulation. It has narrowed the space in which individuals have the freedom to question the liberal democratic state on their own terms, leaving the only mechanisms for dissent those that Chapter Two have shown to be unrepresentative. For those individuals wishing the freedom to articulate their dissent in their own terms they now have to do so outside the system of liberal democracy and risk being branded a 'criminal' for doing so. As Monbiot states;

'People trying to change society for the better have been turned, by degrees, into criminals. The scales of justice are being re-calibrated. As public order gives way to private order, a criminal record will become the mark of good citizenship' (Monbiot, 1998:18).

If we return to McKay's argument at the beginning of this section, the liberal democratic state will only respond to counter EDA if it perceives this activity to be a threat. From the discussion made in this section it can be seen that, in these terms, the liberal democratic state views EDA to be a considerable threat to its stable functioning. One can argue that that as individuals have attempted to articulate their dissatisfaction with the hegemonic form of political relations, the liberal democratic state has responded with attempts to limit the range of protest that can be carried out legally. This process can be seen as simply one of 'democratic enclosure', and is perhaps best articulated by Garrison;

'It is an axiom of history that when the people begin to question the right of their leaders to govern, the leaders question the right of the people to question' (Garrison, in Porritt, 1984:220).

### Conclusion.

This chapter has illustrated the distinguishing features of the internal values and structure of EDA as viewed from the perspective of the third space. It has shown that as a result of EDA's ethic of autonomy at the level of the individual each activist has personal responsibility for



invoking in practice the cultural values of EDA. It has illustrated that this invocation can be achieved in the many spaces of EDA, for action is not solely concerned with the physical spaces of EDA, but is about 'doing what you can from where you are' (Maxey, 1999:205). This chapter has discussed that EDA in Britain is generally characterised by non-violence towards people, but not necessarily property, and due to the liberal democratic state's re-classification of EDA as a 'serious' crime, it is rarely defined by 'accountability' in the classic civil disobedience tradition. Due to the ethic of personal autonomy, EDA in practice works best when an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and respect can be created. This can occur when spaces of EDA have enough time and relative stability to 'self-organise'; however, due to the inherent risk involved in having no form of hierarchical organisation, this opportunity for 'self-organisation' is often missed and pure chaos, or a conventional form of modern organisation, is invoked. These latter forms of organisation have little to do with the cultural values of EDA that can be seen to be 'rhizomatic' in nature. EDA is at once simple and complex, self-generating, but operating within vast combinatorial networks. Perhaps due to the rhizomatic character of EDA, the liberal democratic state views this eco-activity to be a marked threat to its stable functioning. This viewpoint can be seen in practice through the multifarious means through which the liberal democratic state has attempted to counter the threat by EDA through legislation, intimidation and arrest. Based on the spatial practices of EDA as outlined in the preceding chapters, what conclusions can be drawn on the geography of EDA, and the significance of its cultural vision? These questions will be tackled, along with reflections on the methodological approach of this research, in the final chapter of this thesis. Here, Environmental Direct Action from the perspective of third space will be reflected upon and assessed.



<sup>i</sup> Third space perspectives of EDA are not the only ones that can be taken. Alternative perspectives of EDA view the physical spaces of action to be the only place where 'authentic' EDA is practised. This can be exemplified in the pragmatic and often cynical way in which the virtual spaces of EDA are perceived by activists (see Chapter Four), and the elitist attitude of some 'ego-warriors' (as noted in Chapter Five). If EDA is viewed from a perspective that privileges the physical spaces of action, EDA becomes a phenomenon that is isolated from any other aspect of not only mainstream society, but also counter-cultural society. As a consequence, the physical spaces of EDA do not combine together with other spaces of action to form combinatorial networks, but rather are detached islands of resistance. This perspective not only encourages an elitist attitude in regard to the physical spaces of EDA, but also to the types of 'action' within these physical sites. For example, some individuals valorise the physically demanding (and often risky) practices on site, such as tree house construction or tunnel excavation. Other activities that contribute to the existence of the site, such as site-sitting, cooking and cleaning/maintenance are seen to be inferior, and have little to do with EDA per se. Such elitism was rarely experienced at Ashton Court, but did surface during times of eviction stress when those who had decided to work until they dropped berated those who took a more relaxed approach;

Chris doing walkway workshops with 2 Germans, Jo and Wiz tunnelling. Julie site-sitting etc. Damage and Ellie off doing things - all very busy in Bulgaria. They're bitching about those at Craggy cos they're not working as hard - it's the 'lunchout' site - but by Scott's own admission there's nothing to be done there - except pinch all the water and cider - Craggy are having a debate over the quality of men's zippers!. 'we're saving the world!', and Scott is still invisible by the way (Appendix I:69)

'There was a definite 'hierarchy of the harness' (the 'Cabal of the Carabiner'?). If you were not fit and able to climb trees, then you were relegated to ground support... I would never advocate stopping all forms of tree protests...however it is one tactic amongst many, [and] we should never neglect the others which can be just as effective' (Voices from Earth First!, 1996:28).

From this perspective, therefore, EDA becomes less about individuals acting in line with their own skills and restraints and more to do with an elitist activity that involves conformity, and elements of hierarchy (i.e. individuals must not deviate from what the elite do, and they must learn to behave 'appropriately'). These characteristics thus replicate rather than challenge the modern, and often patriarchal, elements of mainstream society, resulting in EDA becoming alienating, disempowering and divisive.



**Chapter Seven. Environmental Direct Action: making space for new forms of political community?**

In the previous chapters we have seen how political resistance in the form of Environmental Direct Action is fundamentally about making political space. Space is crucially significant for the articulation of individuals' political identity and the enactment of political visions. This thesis has demonstrated that although individuals have access to the political spaces inscribed by the liberal democratic state, a number of democratic deficits control the means and manner of political representation enjoyed in these spaces. As a consequence, some individuals have their political voice listened to and acted upon in these arenas, whilst others are marginalised and silenced. Space is thus the platform from which a range of political powers can be brokered. Specific visions and practices of the environment, society and culture can be valorised, whilst competing constructions marginalised, discouraged or even criminalised. The struggle for political representation and the articulation of counter-hegemonic political identities becomes manifest geographically through the (re)creation of political space in innovative ways. Those marginalised by the dominant system seek to adapt or subvert existing uses of space, or exploit the emancipatory potential of new technologies, in order to create a space in which their political visions can be articulated and practised. One such group of marginalised individuals are Environmental Direct Activists. EDA-ers have reacted to the deficits of liberal democracy by practising numerous acts of resistance. The spatiality of these resistance practices, and their challenge to the conventional spaces of liberal democracy, has been the subject of this thesis. This final chapter brings together the theoretical and empirical arguments outlined to date to assess Environmental Direct Action. Reflecting on the case of Ashton Court in particular, as well as EDA in general, this chapter assesses the geography of EDA, the political and cultural preferences it seeks to advance, and thus the degree to which EDA makes space for new forms of political community. In order to achieve a comprehensive assessment, this chapter will initially reflect upon the methodological approach of this thesis.

**Reflections on approaching academic research from the third space.**

'There exists a strong, but one-sided and thus untrustworthy idea that in order to better understand a foreign culture, one must enter into it, forgetting one's own, and view the world through the eyes of this foreign culture.... Of course, the possibility of seeing the world through its eyes is a necessary part of the process of understanding it; but if this were the only aspect it would be duplication and would not entail anything enriching.

In order to understand, it is immensely important for the person who understands to be located outside the object of his or her creative understanding – in time, in space, in culture. In the realm of culture, outsideness is a most powerful factor in understanding. We raise new questions for a foreign culture, ones that it did not raise for itself; we seek answers to our own questions of it; and the foreign culture responds to us by revealing to us its new aspects and semantic depths' (Bakhtin, in Marcus,



1998:116).

As Chapter Three has outlined, I initially approached the study of EDA's values, structure and spatiality without having consciously interrogated my own positional location in relation to the subject. I was vaguely aware that since I was a 'professional student' I was, in Bakhtin's terms, located 'outside the object of [my] creative understanding'. However, I was not simply located outside it in a neutral, passive space, rather I had become situated almost by default within the conventional site for social science research – within what Soja has called a 'second space' epistemology (1996). I became aware of this positioning during my initial encounters with EDA-ers. In the eyes of some activists, it was clear that I was an 'academic', and since they looked upon the recuperative tendencies of academia with distrust, this branding appeared to do little for my chances of a positive research relationship. As a result of the antipathy felt towards me (or more accurately, my position) I came to interrogate more rigorously the problems existing within conventional academic positionality for a study of this kind.

Through the interrogation of conventional academic positionality, the inchoate reservations I had over 'second space' approaches found more confident articulation. I felt I was not simply an 'academic', but inhabited a number of personal, professional, in short political, spaces. Consequently I did not wish to approach 'the subject of my creative understanding' purely from an 'academic' standpoint (and thus duplicate other studies of EDA) or from an entrenched activist position (and thus duplicate information found in the alternative media, albeit perhaps for a new audience). Rather I wished to study EDA from a position that reflected my own – from a perspective that acknowledged the multiple, dynamic and often apparently paradoxical facets and spatialities of my identity. I did not wish to reject the 'academic' position as I recognised that this location offers specialist skills for understanding (following Halfacree, 1999), as well as critical distance from the practice of EDA (following Bakhtin, above). However, I also did not wish to forfeit the emancipatory potential promised through becoming aware of my multiple positioning<sup>1</sup>.

Following particularly the work of Routledge (1996), this desired positionality located me within the 'third space'. This third space was a site within, yet at the same time without, both academia and activism. It acknowledged the diversity of political spaces that individuals inhabit. Using this approach I was able to 'step into' my repertoire of 'selves' that inhabit academic spaces, as well my range of selves which occupy activist spaces, and then step outside again. This oscillation between spaces was an insightful, but also a frequently difficult process. If Routledge's analogy of Escher's lizards is extended (as noted in Chapter Three), at periodic

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<sup>1</sup> I am aware that my feelings towards EDA may appear somewhat coy or ambiguous. That is because they are. Perhaps in the same way that an individual may support a political party on some issues, but be vehemently against them on others, so is my affiliation to EDA. One of functions of this research was



intervals I felt the movement between differing political spaces involved me 'shedding skins' (in the same way as reptiles periodically do). Through gaining insights about the world from one position, through necessity or chance I then merged into another, itself involving a new set of circumstances, rules and customs of behaviour. Or as Marcus (1995:113) states, it involved a, 'constantly mobile, recalibrating practice of positioning in terms of [my] shifting affinities for, affiliations with, as well as alienations from, those with whom [I] interact[ed] at different sites'. The process of 'skin shedding' involved the swift 'acclimatisation' to new norms of behaviour, which perhaps were initially peculiar or tested my abilities to cope. (I found it useful to think of this process through mixing Routledge's metaphors with those of Abbey (1975), in particular when he describes his feelings about his first white water experience, see Appendix VIII). On reflection however this difficult process did furnish me with useful information for research. Through coming clean about my own (con)fused positionality to activists, especially in the physical spaces of EDA, I was able to establish the integrity of my research aims. Activists appreciated my honest (con)fusion of positionality, as they too encountered similar experiences in their 'stepping into' and 'out of' spaces of activism. In short, this process enabled me to establish my humanity to activists, and as a result, I was able to obtain representative experience of the spatiality and culture of EDA practice, as well as authoritative activist voices to use as part of the thesis. (I feel this honesty was crucial in the success of the third space approach to EDA. Of course it is also possible for the third space to be exploited by someone unsympathetic to their research subject, but the ethics of such a practice would remain highly questionable)<sup>1</sup>. In conjunction with the voices of activists, I also attempted to integrate my own humanity into the 'voice' used to write up the project. Through choosing not to eliminate my 'somewhere else's' (Spivak, 1990:14) from this voice, I hoped to evoke the range of passions, intuitions and sensations that I felt were helpful to me in the comprehension of EDA. As a result of this integration of voices, I hoped to engage with the reader's holistic humanity – not simply with their intellect, but also their emotion and perhaps even spirit, and thus offer them a holistic understanding of EDA. Through being sited in a space that is within, and yet at the same time without, both academic and activist arenas, I was able to 'see the world through the eyes of [these] foreign culture[s]' (be they academia or activism) and then step outside them again to raise new questions, as well as seek my own answers to them. Thus as a consequence of being sited in the third space, I was able to tentatively configure an alternative perspective of both the practice of academia, and EDA.

Being located in the third space, I felt an arena had been created where the 'fossilised' practices of 'second space' epistemologies need no longer inhibit research; as a result, academics could

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for me to investigate further my feelings towards EDA (and this thesis is a representation of them), and the multiple positioning that the third space facilitates has been central to this objective.



be more open about their political positioning in relation to their subject. Through operating within an academic department, I became aware of the privileged position academics enjoy (at the doctoral level at least) in terms of the space and time they have to read, reflect and become literate on a range of subjects. With this new-found understanding, it seemed to me appropriate to attempt to use this knowledge to further debates and arguments in which I felt I had a stake, to paraphrase Kitchen & Hubbard (1999:198) I saw geographical study as being as much about changing the world as studying it. In this light, academia could no longer be viewed as an apolitical practice, but rather as a form of political action. Through the way in which academia interprets and produces the social world it has the ability to reinforce particular power relations or destabilise them with alternative options. Thus academia is not an atomised, apolitical intellectual activity, a practice involving thinking but no doing, or words but no deeds. In my interpretation of academia from the third space perspective there is no dichotomy between these practices – words are *in* deeds, and deeds *in* words (a point expanded on in relation to EDA, below). In the words of Sharp et al (2000) these practices are intertwined, knotted together, or ‘entangled’.

I found it useful to think of this point in terms of the following extract from ‘Digging’, by Seamus Heaney;

‘The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap  
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge  
Through living roots awaken in my head.  
But I’ve no spade to follow men like them.

Between the finger and my thumb  
The squat pen rests.  
I’ll dig with it’ (Heaney, 1984:12).

This extract highlights to me the ability for an apparently intellectual activity involving simply ‘thought’ and ‘words’ to be a complement to, or itself a manifestation of, political action. It can equate to the practical action of digging with a spade (in the same way perhaps as a campaigner in the physical spaces of EDA may construct a tunnel), it is another space from which political visions and identities can be created. To be aware of this spatial positioning, of our situatedness in the political world, implies that we occupy spaces from which we can attempt to change that world. These spaces are, therefore, potential spaces of activism. Following Maxey (1999:201), ‘activism means doing as much as I can from where I am at’; Since some of my ‘selves’ inhabit academic spaces, these specific spaces can also be sites of activism. Adopting approaches to research that acknowledge these points, such as the third space approach, therefore destabilises in practice conventional distinctions between academia and activism. Academics do not simply ‘think’, and conversely, activists do not simply ‘do’. Both are engaged in practices that can be seen to be political, and contributing to various forms



of political action. Through destabilising these distinctions in this way, the third space approach can add to our understanding not only of 'foreign cultures' (after Bakhtin, above) but also of our own cultural assumptions, prejudices and positionality. In the case of academia, the third space approach has thus illustrated that the distinction between academia and activism is not so clear cut as once imagined. These practices can be 'entangled' together. This process of entanglement is also definitive of the third geographies of EDA.

### (Third space) geographies of EDA.

Through researching EDA from a / as a third space, this study moves away from the stereotypical view of Environmental Direct Action - as an activity solely located at a single isolated site of 'physical action'. This rejection does nothing to detract from the significance of these physical spaces for EDA's geography of resistance, rather it offers a broader perspective in which these physical spaces do not occur in isolation, and are not the only type of space which EDA-ers make. Through focusing on the sites associated with Ashton Court, I found that EDA-ers make physical space in a number of ways. I experienced aspects of the action camp (a space created at a threatened environmental site), the street party (a temporary celebration of a car-free zone), and the Gathering (a 2/3 day event involving activists from a range of campaigns informally brainstorming and partying). This focus on Ashton Court was not intended to be a holistic representation of all the physical spaces associated with EDA (itself perhaps an impossible task due to the variety and dynamism of the phenomenon) but instead a 'peripatetic, translativ mapping of [a] brave new world' (Marcus, 1995:114).

The third space geography of EDA does not configure the physical spaces of EDA to occur in isolation. Action camps, gatherings and street parties are not simply an aggregation of disparate sites, but rather are 'woven' together – to extend the use of Sharp et al's notion, they are 'entangled' (2000). For those inhabiting these physical spaces this intertwining and binding process is achieved principally through the use of an oral telegraph system, or 'oral trackway'. These oral trackways are created informally through the movement of EDA-ers between physical spaces, spreading news, politics, and gossip about tactics, campaigns and mutual friends. Activists become further empowered through the support and collective spirit engendered from being one knot in this local, regional as well as international community network.

This 'entangled geography' of EDA is extended and reinforced further by the other spaces that EDA-ers make. New PC and communication technology have opened up the electronic frontier and made possible the taking and making of public space in the virtual sphere. Discursive communication for EDA-ers is now not restricted to the movement of activists and the creation of informal oral trackways, but can be spread through the Internet at all geographical scales.



These advances provide a number of benefits to activists. They enable fast, interactive communication between campaigns, and allow a platform for representation that is completely controlled by the activists themselves. As a result, the virtual spaces of EDA allow the opportunity for mobilisation, validation and enlargement of the EDA community (following Gamson & Wolfsfield, 1993), especially since it is a resource that can be easily accessed by non-active but nevertheless ecologically concerned individuals. The virtual spaces of EDA therefore extend and reinforce EDA's community, but from within the movement it is clear that the virtual sphere does not herald a substitute for the physical spaces of EDA. This space does 'bind' or entangle individuals together into a virtual community, but this community is merely a 'simulation'. It does not involve 'authentic' (perhaps face-to-face physiognomic) communication between humans or between humans and the non-human environment. From the second space perspective, this conclusion would lead to a hierarchical and exclusive valorisation of the physical spaces of EDA over the virtual; but from the third space both these arenas become entangled as part of the geography of EDA. For those whose skills are located in cyberspace, or for those who cannot operate in physical spaces, the virtual arena is another space from which individuals can practice political action, and do what they can to contribute to, reinforce and support the day-to-day practices of the EDA community.

EDA-ers have not only attempted to make their own (political) space, but have also tried to take that of others. This can be seen most clearly in the arena of the mainstream media. In this domain EDA-ers have attempted to get their message across through playing to the media's own news culture. As a result of this, they can be seen to have had relative success in terms of the quantity and frequency of media coverage, but EDA-ers themselves are unhappy with the 'recuperative' effect of reportage. Through focusing on elements of 'conflict', 'drama' and 'human interest', the mainstream media appears to entertain rather than politically empower its audience. As a result of their inability to reconfigure the culture of the mainstream media to their own ends, many activists have become wary of operating in this space at all. As a response to the restrictions of the mainstream media, EDA-ers have made their own alternative media spaces. At the national level (for example 'SchNEWS', and 'Undercurrents'), the regional level (for example 'West Country Activist Newsletter', and 'Conscious Cinema') and the local level (for example 'Bristle' and 'I-contact') the alternative media gives another platform to activists which they can fully control. Through providing an outlet in which EDA-ers can articulate their own political visions in their own words (be it in the form of stories, cartoons, or theoretical diatribes) the alternative media further empowers and reinforces the practice of those in the physical spaces of EDA. The alternative media thus becomes another element that is entangled into the geography of EDA. Due to the entangled nature of these spaces, it becomes unclear where the physical, virtual, and media arenas of EDA begin and end.



As a result of this entanglement of spaces it is clear that the physical, virtual and media spaces of EDA have evolved together into a geography of sites which are mutually supportive, feed each other, and have come to rely on each other for their continued existence.

It is the entanglement of spatial practices that has come to be definitive of the geography of EDA. Environmental Direct Action now emanates from connected webs of radical practices, with each space of action a 'knot' within an entanglement of communicative threads.



Figure 7:1. EDA as represented by activists on the (now defunct) 'Interactivism' website  
([www.interactivism.com](http://www.interactivism.com))

The entangled geography of EDA is represented by some activists by illustrations such as that reproduced in Figure 7:1. This representation suggests the way in which the majority of the spaces of EDA go relatively unnoticed (they operate underground, out of sight of conventional society - as represented by the 'nodules' in 7:1) and these are bound together by various communicative channels (the 'roots' in 7:1). However, in certain spectacular ways the practices of EDA combine and capture the attention of the mainstream media and society (as represented by the tree image in Figure 7:1). EDA thus becomes popularly defined by these spectacular and visible practices, overlooking the other spaces of EDA that exist. Through the visibility of some EDA practices further alliances are formed with other environmental and political groups, and the entangled geography of EDA develops. EDA branches out to deal with new issues, and takes and makes new political spaces – EDA is thus a highly innovative and dynamic phenomenon. The entangled geography of EDA thus provides a multitude of spaces from which activists can evoke their own political and cultural practices, and the next section of this chapter outlines the characteristics of these facets of EDA from the perspective of third space.



The political and cultural practices of EDA as viewed from third space.

Through taking and making their own spaces, EDA-ers have been able to provide themselves a platform from which they can evoke their own political and cultural practices. In these terms, many have argued that EDA is an expression of resistance to the numerous deficits of liberal democracy. It is perhaps a spectacular and innovative phenomenon, but emanates solely from a wish to have alternative voices listened to by those in authority. As Brass & Poklewski Koziell (1997) report;

‘[EDA-ers] need to participate in the mainstream to change that which they complain about - even by voting and being elected’ (1997:123).

This view of EDA is satirised widely by activists themselves, as the following excerpt from an EDA review of Brass & Poklewski Koziell’s work illustrates,

‘In case you were going to be scared off by the radicalism of all those nasty protester types this book says [EDA-ers] are not really anarchists, they’re just lobbying using light-hearted and imaginative stunts. ‘DIY culture’ is thus presented as an effort at unblocking the channels [of democracy], at making ourselves heard in the corridors of power - a sort of pep me up tonic to rejuvenate British democracy. For the [book’s authors, EDA] is simply a question of our voice not being heard’ (Voices from Earth First, 1998:140).

Approaching EDA from the third space also rejects the view that it simply represents a homeostasis mechanism for liberal democracy. A by-product of EDA *does* involve pressure being brought to bear on the liberal democratic system, and it has been relatively successful in making politicians ‘feel the heat’ of public pressure, rather than ‘seeing the light’ of ecological values (this can be seen most markedly in relation to road building and the transport issue). However, the third space perspective configures EDA in much broader terms. EDA is a practice / praxis with its own cultural and political preferences that not only challenges the deficits of liberal democracy, but also the political structure and organisation of (late) modern society itself. To paraphrase Beck, EDA is an articulation of the public’s critical reflection of the negative consequences of late modernity. Ecological crises are now not simply, ‘unseen side effects of industrial production’, but have evolved into a, ‘profound institutional crisis of industrial society itself’ (1994:8).

‘The combination of galloping technology and energetic capitalism [is] wreaking havoc all over the planet. The present notion of democracy is ever more redundant. It cannot do the job that’s needed because it comes from a bygone era. Asking old-style, nation-state democracy to tame [multi-national corporations] is like trying to slow down a car by tugging on the reins. The protesters know that; that’s why they’re not wasting their time on conventional politics. By their actions, they are demanding a 21st century equivalent of the shift from aristocratic rule to universal suffrage sought in the last century. Back then the political response was mass democracy. But what should the



response be now?' (Freedland, 1999:21).

The third space approach views EDA as a form of resistance that configures liberal democracy to be redundant at the end of the twentieth century. Using Freedland's terms, its 'political response' to the 'havoc wreaked by galloping technology and energetic capitalism' is to take and make place in order to invoke a different set of cultural practices. Thus the space created by EDA is not intended to rectify the democratic deficits of liberal democracy; rather it attempts to create an alternative to this system. In short, EDA is a response to an undemocratic political system but its primary objective is not to philanthropically install procedural neutrality to modern governance, EDA wishes to create a different form of political system biased towards its own set of cultural preferences.

This thesis has argued that EDA's cultural preferences can be characterised by the complications it introduces into liberal democratic notions of the 'environment' and in terms of the particular forms of power and organisation practised. EDA complicates liberal democratic notions of the 'environment' in a number of ways. As described above, EDA-ers develop strong associations with the non-human environment through experiencing and living close to the land in the physical spaces of EDA. This 're-inhabitation' of the land decreases the alienation inherent in modern life between humans and the non-human environment, and activists' well-being becomes 'entangled' with the health of the environment. One way in which we can think about the ways in which this entanglement complicates notions of the environment is to use ecological philosophy. Fox's *Transpersonal Ecology* (1995) is useful to us as it introduces the idea that individuals' sensibility for the non-human environment is not focused purely at a local level. EDA-ers, for example, are not only motivated to protect environments that they have 'personal' attachment to, or even 'ontological' attachment; rather commitment and support is shown for practices that protect environments that individuals have never personally seen or experienced (this Fox calls 'cosmological identification'). Naess' notion of *Deep Ecology* (1989) is also useful as it makes us aware that EDA-ers do not see the non-human environment in purely instrumental terms. The intrinsic value of the environment, as well as the evolutionary process itself, is a sensibility that is acute in many EDA-ers. As a result, environmental protection should be practised not simply because it is a sane and sustainable long-term use of resources, but also because of the inherent value of non-human species and landscapes. Bookchin's *Social Ecology* (1995) provides a useful entry point to our understanding of the way that EDA-ers integrate the social and political into their configuration of the 'environment'. As EDA-ers see humanity as part of 'nature' rather than apart from it, apparently single, or 'non-environmental' issues become entangled together as separate but intertwined threads in EDA-ers' notion of the 'environment'. Or as the following activists have it;

'We realise that no issue is isolated, be it exploitation of workers, the peasant farmers going bankrupt, the indigenous



peoples getting displaced by 'development' programmes, or our environment being destroyed. We also realise that we must act together and UNITE OUR STRUGGLES AGAINST the social, political, and economic institutions of the capitalist system.'

(<http://www.seattlewto.org/n30>)

The environment as configured by EDA-ers is thus not something that is 'outside' the realm of humanity, rather humans are a part of, and permeated by the non-human environment. EDA-ers' ecocentric, or holistic, view of the environment sees no genuine division in reality between human and non-human species, it views all species as existing in a closed 'web' of connectivity. Unlike the liberal perspective that views society as nothing more than an aggregation of fundamentally separate and atomised individuals, EDA-ers see themselves (and society) defined in part by the interrelations between humans as well as non-humans. This notion of community is practised in the physical spaces of EDA through the communal living experienced at these sites. Through living and working together for a common (ecological) cause, and against a common enemy, those in the physical spaces of EDA become bound, or entangled, together. Strong community ties are created, and the groups begin to act not as a set of disparate individuals, but as a complete collective unit (often without recourse to formal meetings or hierarchical command). This community entanglement becomes the basis for more permanent collectives, either of travelling EDA-ers (in the case of the 'e-team') or sedentary activists (in the case of the 'Dongas' at 'Tinker's Bubble' in Devon, or at 'Kebele' in Bristol). As a result of these various 'community' entanglements, EDA-ers' 'environment' becomes deeply precious and bound up with their whole understanding of life; in the words of Bunting (1998:4), the environment becomes 'sacred' to them. The entanglement of human and non-human into the community of EDA is well expressed by the following activist;

I care about environmental issues as I care about life and they are inseparable, whether that be my own life, or the totality of life. Thus environmental issues are inseparable from social, cultural, etc...

respondant1@email.address Fri Feb 6 17:18:37 1998

And is echoed by the Thomas Berry (this passage is taken from a book that was read by, and inspired, many activists at Craggy Island);

'It was an early afternoon in May when I first looked down over the scene and saw the meadow.... A magic moment, this experience gave to my life something, I know not what, that seems to explain my life at a more profound level than almost any other experience that I can remember.... It was not something conscious that happened just then. I went on about my life as any young person might do. Perhaps it was not simply this moment that made such a deep impression upon me. Perhaps it was a sensitivity that was developed throughout my childhood. Yet as the years pass this moment returns to me and whenever I think about my basic life attitude and the whole trend of my mind and causes that I have given my efforts to, I seem to come back to this moment and the impact it has had on my feelings for what is real and worthwhile in life.



This early experience, it seems, has become normative for me throughout the entire range of my thinking. Whatever preserves and enhances this meadow in the natural cycles of its transformation is good, what is opposed to this meadow or negates it is not good. My life orientation is that simple. It is also that pervasive. It applies in economics and political orientation as well as in education and religion and whatever...' (Berry, in McLuhan, 1995:220)<sup>2</sup>.

The second characteristic of EDA's political and cultural preferences have been demonstrated in Chapters Four, Five and Six of this thesis. These chapters have illustrated that EDA's structure and political organisation is invoked in practice at the level of the autonomous individual. EDA-ers view power not as something to be granted in a top down fashion, but taken by individuals. To reiterate Reclaim the Streets' statement, 'the most important thing [about EDA] is that we won't be asking the politicians to create a future for us, we will create it for ourselves' (RTS, 1996) <sup>3</sup>, or as one virtual questionnaire respondent puts it;

'All those people who say your vote is your power really have no idea what power is'  
From respondent2@email.address Thu Feb 12 05:03:42 1998

EDA-ers therefore see that the deficits apparent within the liberal democratic system, and the institutional crisis this symbolises within late modern society as whole, are not to be solved through conventional liberal channels, but through a new form of political organisation. Reflecting Held's alternative conception of democracy (1995), EDA-ers see their preferred form of organisation to be a form of 'popular power', with autonomous individuals taking responsibility themselves to invoke their own cultural preferences.

Due to this ethic of personal autonomy, EDA works best in practice when an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and respect can be created. When this is established, EDA spaces are not characterised by hierarchical or top-down modes of organisation, rather they are 'self-' or 'dis-organised'. This form of organisation does however bring with it an inherent risk: as Chapter Six noted, EDA spaces may fossilise into more conventionally organised or enclosed entities, or dissipate into utter chaos. Despite this risk, 'dis-organisation' does offer the opportunity for activists to operate in truly autonomous zones with an absence of coercive authority. This brand of EDA anarchy gives activists the space in order to experiment with different forms of activity that combine together to define the practice of EDA itself.

*Who do you perceive to be an authentic direct activist?*  
Anyone who acts openly and respectfully to create a space for what they truly believe  
respondant9@email.address Fri Feb 27 01:21:1998

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<sup>2</sup> This perspective can be seen to complement Leopold's 'Land Ethic' (1949).

<sup>3</sup> This notion is known in some quarters as 'Do it Yourself', or DIY Culture, but perhaps is more appropriately termed a culture of 'DIO' or 'Do it Ourselves' (see McKay, 1998).



This thesis has adopted an explicitly spatial take on EDA. Using the third space perspective, it has recognised the various constraints placed on individuals in terms of their skills, abilities and positional location. As a result, this perspective views EDA not simply as a physical attempt to prevent environmental destruction (although this is a significant vocabulary of action), but, as the quotation above outlines, as any action that creates space in which ecological values can be invoked. EDA thus becomes manifest in the various spaces of 'action' that individuals inhabit at any period of their lives. One can therefore practice EDA if one adopts the conviction to, 'do as much as you can from where you are at'. This philosophy Maxey (1999:201) terms a 'direct action attitude'. This view strongly complements that of the third space since it acknowledges explicitly the importance of the spatial dimension of political life. Coupled to this, it also makes clear that this spatiality is not singular in nature, but involves a multiplicity of positional locations. The third space approach thus configures EDA to be entangled with a number of practices in a range of spaces. EDA is any practice that attempts to carve out an oppositional space to the dominant hegemony for the articulation of specific environmental visions. EDA can be seen (most visibly) in the frontline spaces of action where environmental defences are formed, yet it can also be experienced in the carnival atmosphere of the street party, the cyberspatial domain of the Internet, the ritualised and custom-based spaces of EDA camps, and through the formation of eco-theories, myth creations as well as political analysis<sup>4</sup>. EDA is thus not limited to the narrow caricature of the 'eco-warrior', or even the image of the activist taking place in urban centres (for example at the Carnival against Capitalism in London, 1999, or at the World Trade Organisation protests in Seattle, 1999), but includes those who were not present at these occasions, yet helped to support and network them (be they 'City' analysts, academics, 'Middle England-ers', or 'Pansies'<sup>5</sup>).

The third space perspective thus sees EDA as a connected and intertwined practice, entangling a variety of spaces, activities and identities. These practices are defined altogether differently than they would be from a 'dualistic' second space location. Where the rationally cognitive second space approach conceptualises EDA's opposition to the dominant hegemony as a reversal of the dualism of 'thinking' and 'doing' (EDA-ers are different because they 'act' rather than merely 'think'); the third space approach introduces other options. It suggests that EDA can be seen as a praxis that integrates both 'action' and 'thinking'. This is achieved not simply through adopting both oppositional practices (i.e. through some EDA-ers simply theorising action, and others simply practising it) but through transcending the artificial division between these practices. This has been demonstrated in Chapter Four where the relation between

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<sup>4</sup> You can also argue that EDA is apparent in spaces which this thesis has not covered, for example in alternative economic systems (e.g. variations on LETS schemes).

<sup>5</sup> Pansies: those who are 'Political Active Not Seeking Employment'.



personal ethics and practical action was shown to be (con)fused, where one does not prompt the other, but the two co-exist and combine together so there is no division. Plows (In McKay, 1998:169) echoes this point with her view of the relation between environmental ethics and action;

**‘There is no ‘either/or’ duality, in itself a very western approach. Visualise instead a ‘yin-yang’ symbol. Black and white comprise a unified whole in which one becomes, and is part of, the other; black within white, and vice versa’.**



**Figure 7:2. An ‘ecological’ version of the ‘yin/yang’ symbol (from [www.envirolink.orgs/orgs/arm/](http://www.envirolink.orgs/orgs/arm/)).**

**This unified perspective is also demonstrated in other areas of EDA<sup>6</sup>, as illustrated by Figure 7:2, & 7:3.**



**Figure 7:3. EDA: an Intercourse between destruction and creation (Do or Die, 1999:140).**

**This thesis has thus argued that EDA should be viewed not simply as a phenomenon that critiques the symptoms of liberal democratic society, but also as a practice that seeks to invoke**

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<sup>6</sup> It is also mentioned by Sharp et al (1999:20), they state, ‘the familiar Tao-ist image of the Yin-Yang symbol helps us to visualise our claims about the entanglements of domination and resistance: although the symbol implies a dynamic balance of opposed forces, it implies there to be no complete separation between the two seemingly opposed practices, in that the one will always contain at least the seed of the other.



an alternative vision to modern society. From the third space EDA is configured not simply as a practice of 'deeds not words', but rather as a practice that embodies 'deeds in words', and 'words in deeds'. This entangled view of EDA is also apparent in its geography, as well as its holistic conception of political community. From this third space perspective, EDA should be seen as nothing less than a cultural challenge to the dominant political hegemony. As Merrick states;

'[EDA-ers are] not fighting one thing we don't like: we have a whole vision of how good life could and should be, and we're fighting anything that blocks it. This is not just a campaign, or even a movement; it's a whole culture.... Its a culture derived from a common discontent with the self-interest and blandness that is endemic in western society, and a rejection of the pyramidal power structure that only ever disempowers those at the bottom, and corrupts and compromises those at the top. The alternative power structure is a networking of self-responsibility and co-operation. The emerging culture makes its own political agenda, it's own press and its own music' (1997:9 & 52).

This thesis has shown that the spaces of EDA are generally configured to be radical, particularly in terms of party politics and the liberal tradition at the time of the Millennium. However, as this thesis has shown, EDA can not only be placed in and compared to larger geographical constituencies, but also set within broader temporal communities. When EDA is set within its broader historical context, it can be seen to be not conventionally radical as such, but radically conservative<sup>7</sup>. As Devall & Sessions state, EDA reflects ecological views that,

'articulate a long-established minority stream of religion and philosophy in Western Europe, North America and the Orient. It has strong parallels and shared insights with many religious and philosophical positions of primal peoples (including Native Americans). In a certain sense it can be interpreted as remembering wisdom which men once knew' (1985:80).

In these terms EDA can be seen as part of the return to philosophies and actions practised by 'indigenous' peoples. As Devall & Sessions state, 'radical' environmentalism has strong parallels with Native American wisdom, whilst the communicative threads of EDA (as represented by their 'oral trackways') can be compared favourably to the 'songlines' of Aboriginal Australians. EDA-ers also make allusion to the connectedness they feel with 'indigenous' British peoples such as the 'Celts', as illustrated in Chapter Five. Snyder (1995) introduces another useful historical lineage which EDA-ers can be seen to extend. Snyder identifies a 'third force' which he sees to be apparent throughout different societies<sup>8</sup>. Snyder configures the 'third force' in

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<sup>7</sup> The SchNEWS disclaimer (1998:4), 'The SchNEWS warns all readers to...always stay within the law. In fact please just sit in, watch TV and go on endless Xmas shopping sprees filling your house and lives with endless consumer crap...you will then feel content. Honest.', could be argued, for example, to bear a certain similarity to Mercurius's pronouncement made in circa c373-289B.C.: 'If righteousness be put last and profit first, unsatisfied people will be snatching everything'.

<sup>8</sup> Snyder (1995:12) used the notion of the 'third force' to describe the ancient Essene communities, primitive Christianity, Gnostic communities, and the free spirit heresies of the Middle Ages. He also links



broad terms, he defines groups associated with it as holding similar perspectives of the human condition in relation to the non-human environment, as well as possessing the creativity and political will to invoke these values. This thesis argues that EDA can be seen as a current manifestation of the 'third force'. EDA-ers are part of a lineage which, to paraphrase RTS, takes place to reject all hierarchy and domination, and embraces instead, 'an ecological vision of mutual aid, freedom, complementarity and interdependence' ([www.greenet.org/rts](http://www.greenet.org/rts)). EDA-ers take the 'myths of science', technocracy and rationality that define (late) modern culture (Survivre, 1971), and replace them with ecological-based myths that echo 'Old Gnosts' wisdom from non-modern eras.

#### Conclusion: the political significance of EDA.

'On one level, this is an argument about physical space and location, but on a general level it is also about an argument about the lack of space so many people feel in their own lives. How do you locate yourself in a culture that you feel is being ruined? What are the spaces in your life over which you feel you have any control? How come democracy is failing to provide these things?' (Moore, 1994:18).

This thesis has illustrated the importance of space to political debates. It has shown that the liberal democratic state has been successful in controlling conventional public spaces to the detriment of their democratic content. As a result of the perceived democratic deficits of the conventional system many individuals feel the need for new political spaces to express their complex political identities and create their preferred political communities. This is the political significance of Environmental Direct Action: EDA has been able to re-invoke the counter-hegemonic potential of the public arena by taking and making its own spaces. EDA thus challenges directly both the conventional spaces of liberal democracy i.e. the spaces of electoral representation such as nation states, but also our understanding of them. EDA illustrates that political space needs to be configured in terms its potential for counter-hegemony – be it in physical spaces, in terms of new technological mediators such as the Internet, or in media arenas. Through destabilising existing uses of space and creating new political arenas EDA-ers have provided themselves a platform from which to articulate their challenge to the status quo. These new zones, or 'third spaces', have formed the basis from which groups can attempt to invoke their own visions of political community, as Bhabha states;

'These 'in-between' spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood...[they] initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, in the act of defining the idea of society itself' (Bhabha, 1994:1).

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these communities with Islamic Sufism, early Chinese Taoism, and both Zen and Shin Buddhism. Synder argues that the poetry of William Blake, Walt Whitman and the writings of Henry David Thoreau all belong to this same tradition.



As this chapter has assessed, EDA is politically significant in terms of what it *does* in its new political spaces. EDA not only challenges the culture of liberal democracy, it also attempts to displace it with its own ecologically informed set of preferences. EDA thus represents one voice amongst those who wish for political freedom in order to replace outmoded political structures with new pluralities. They argue for the space in which to practically, 're-evaluate and reframe notions of human autonomy and justice in ways that reflect our changed ecological setting and understanding' (Eckersley, 1996:213).

The geographical structure of third spaces is another politically significant facet of EDA. As this thesis has illustrated, the spaces activists take and make are not isolated, but set within an entangled context of communication and collaboration. The spatial knottings and connecting threads of EDA serve to bind, underpin, support and develop its resistance practices. As a result, in the words of Sharp et al (2000:1), there are;

'Countless material spaces, places and networks which sustain, practically as well as imaginatively and symbolically, the knottings that are the subject of our attention' (Sharp et al, 2000:1).

In light of this 'entangled' geography, how can we assess the long-term political significance of EDA; to what degree will it be capable of destabilising the dominant hegemony of liberal democracy? From the third space perspective it is difficult to make a definitive judgement on this issue due primarily due to the entangled objectives of EDA practice, as well as the on-going nature of activism. One way in which EDA can be assessed is to draw out particular threads of activism and reflect upon their individual political significance. To this end EDA could be judged on its capacity to resist specific environmental destruction. At Ashton Court the translocation of the meadow was completed in Autumn 1998, and limestone-blasting began that winter. EDA in this instance can therefore be seen to have done little to change Bristol City Council's intended future for Top Park Field. In other EDA spaces around the country there are very few instances when EDA has reversed political decisions once they have been made (the most infamous of these being the M3 at Twyford Down and the A34 Newbury bypass). Although EDA may not be successful in preventing specific environmental destruction, it can be judged more favourably in terms of increasing the financial and political cost of specific developments. At Ashton Court, although Pioneer were unwilling to make public the exact cost of EDA, it was alleged by both security guards and activists that their total additional expenditure ran into millions of pounds. Similar situations have occurred at other EDA sites around the country, for example the A30 at Fairmile as well as Manchester Airport. Cost to the developer and the liberal democratic state from EDA can also come in terms of negative public relations. EDA-ers are often capable of obtaining at least tacit public support for their activism and any unfavourable publicity (through various media channels) can have a knock-on effect on the stock-market valuations of multi-national companies, or the electability of certain



individuals or political parties.

EDA can also be seen to be successful in garnering public support. Through its many spaces EDA has been able to capture the imagination of those feeling disenfranchised by the deficits of liberal democracy and disillusioned with the values of the capitalist system. From a situation where this brand of activism did not exist in Britain a decade ago, now tens of thousands can take space in the City of London. Thus even if EDA is not successful at winning specific environmental battles, increasing numbers of people are experiencing a different way of 'doing' environmental politics<sup>9</sup>.

It is possible therefore to tease out specific threads of EDA and assess their individual political significance. Indeed these isolated assessments hint at what I believe to be the overall importance of EDA. In essence EDA is politically significant because it is based on the autonomy of the individual. This structure of power is fundamentally different from the top-down system of liberal democracy, and through evoking this alternative approach activists have basically rejected the authority of the liberal democratic state. This rejection has granted activists a degree of political freedom. Traditional decision-makers are unsure of the rules, agenda and objectives of EDA and thus have found activists difficult to predict and control<sup>10</sup>. Due to this lack of control, those in authority appear reluctant to make controversial decisions that may provoke drawn-out EDA because they are uncertain of and unable to control the political and financial cost it may incur. (As stated in this thesis, it is unlikely that the development of a holiday park in Lyminge Forest will go ahead due to the decreasing possibility of profit for the developers (due in no small measure to the additional cost of removing a EDA action camp from the forest); and it is by no means certain that decision-makers will green light the Salisbury bypass due to fears that it could provide a convenient platform for EDA activity.) However, as Chapter Six has shown, the liberal democratic state is moving quickly to remove EDA-ers' political freedom. Through expanding the definitions of 'criminal' and 'terrorist' activity in the physical, virtual, as well as media spaces of action the liberal democratic state is gradually increasing the powers of its law enforcement agencies to control EDA. This process can be seen as a renewed attempt to enclose the counter-hegemonic potential of EDA's new political spaces. Due to the on-going nature of EDA and counter-EDA measures it is too early to assess the outcome of this process, however, it is likely that EDA will have to find new ways of invoking the counter-hegemonic potential of space if it is going to maintain its political importance.

If EDA were successful in doing this, one can hypothesise over the problems it would encumber

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<sup>9</sup> Zakin makes a similar point with reference to an EDA campaign in the United States, she states; 'No trees were saved by Redwood Summer, but thousands of students were initiated into counter-cultural politics' (Zakin, 1993:396).

<sup>10</sup> In the classical Renaissance science tradition, one might say.



when trying to maintain a viable alternative to the liberal democratic state. If EDA continues to grow and reinvent itself it may still have problems to overcome in terms of its internal structure. How could an essentially non-violent and non-coercive political community deal with dissenting voices or a violent enemy? Indeed, how could a minority culture overcome on a large scale the inertia of the existing paradigm? Due to the immense difficulties thrown up by these questions, it seems unlikely that EDA in its present form could represent a serious challenge to the hegemony of liberal democracy. This point is conceded by some activists;

Dan said yesterday that, 'its funny that the security take us so seriously!' (Appendix I:21)

*Could you describe how you think environmental/political change is most likely to come about (in the direction you would wish)?*

I don't know. Not by lobbying. Not by good media. Maybe not at all.

From respondent3@email.address

But although it is unlikely that the spaces of EDA could challenge those of liberal democracy on a large scale, this thesis has illustrated that EDA is still of immense political significance. It is articulation of the need for space in order to live life in a way that resonates with the complexities of one's soul and integrity, and the inherent need to fight for this space if the organisational mode of society does not provide it for you. In this light, Fiddes (1999:53) comments insightfully on the significance of EDA, he states EDA is important in terms of its 'good example'. Roszak explains this point further, he states;

'Even if one only goes a few steps out of the mainstream to redesign some small piece of one's life - it is a sign to one's fellows that something better is possible, something that does not have to await the attention of experts but begins here and now with you and me. In changing one's own life one may not intend to change the world; but there is never any telling how far the power of imaginative example travels' (Roszak, 1989:436).

EDA-ers in the 1990s have thus chosen to take responsibility for their futures and have attempted to reclaim space in which to live their chosen lives. Through their practice they hope to set the example for living in a political community that is self-directed and sustainable. Environmental Direct Action is the latest manifestation of the inevitable counter-hegemonic resistance that takes space to symbolise an ecologically inspired vision of hope and freedom for society. Or as one activist states;

I [practice EDA] because...it is the only way to conceptualise what it means to be free.

From respondent2@email.address Thu Feb 12 05:03:42 1998



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<sup>1</sup> Afterword.

Reflections on approaching academic research from the third space: the legislative codification of EDA.

The future success of the third space approach to EDA, and indeed any investigation of the subject, is open to question if the Prevention of Terrorism Bill passing through parliament becomes law. This Bill will make it obligatory for any member of the public who has information about anyone redefined as a terrorist (and as Chapter Six has stated, this would include EDA-ers) to report this information to the police. Thus in terms of academic research this Bill removes source confidentiality and precludes the possibility of trust being established between the researcher and research subject. The Bill also makes it an offence to support, by word or deed, activities such as EDA. This classification would thus make a third space account of EDA potentially criminal and terrorist in nature, and would perhaps even make a university an accessory to terrorist activity through activists (as well as third space researchers) using departmental computers for EDA-related activity. The Bill would also complicate mailing lists and conference activity involving academics and activists. According to Liberty, the Bill means that if you so much as talk at a meeting that you know will be addressed by someone from a 'terrorist' organisation (i.e. an environmental campaigner), you could face ten years in prison (Vidal, 2000:4). If this Bill is passed it appears that the possibility of academic research into EDA activity in the future would become increasingly unlikely.



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For clarity, the bibliography is separated into 'Academic', 'Media', and 'Virtual' references.

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This Land Is Ours	<a href="http://www.oneworld.org/tlio">http://www.oneworld.org/tlio</a>
This Land Is Ours	<a href="http://www.envirolink.org/orgs/tlio">http://www.envirolink.org/orgs/tlio</a>
This Land Is Ours	<a href="http://www.oneworld.org/tlio">http://www.oneworld.org/tlio</a>
Thuringen	<a href="http://www.free.de/dryads/english/eindex.htm">http://www.free.de/dryads/english/eindex.htm</a>
Transport 2000	<a href="http://www.msunion.org/t2000/index.html">http://www.msunion.org/t2000/index.html</a>
Undercurrents	<a href="http://www.gn.apc.org/www.undercurrents.org">http://www.gn.apc.org/www.undercurrents.org</a>
Undercurrents	<a href="http://antenna.nl/~smallwor/undercurrents/index.html">http://antenna.nl/~smallwor/undercurrents/index.html</a>
Urban75	<a href="http://194.112.40.4/Urban75/main.htm">http://194.112.40.4/Urban75/main.htm</a>



**Urban75** <http://www.urban75.com/index.html>  
**US EFl** <http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~efirst>  
**Weed** <http://www.venus.co.uk/~weed/welcome.html>  
**Whatley Quarry Pages** <http://www.geocities.com/soho/9000/whatley.htm>  
**World Trade Organisation Campaign** <http://www.seattlewto.org/n30>



**Appendix I.**

**Full transcription of Field Diary.**

Friday 27th March

2nd visit to AC (first was prematurely cut short due to being a big girl - sign 'dont dig it' // alevel stuff!)

One the grounds of meeting up with Sue Carter (local i.e. Bristol FoE) after being told on the phone that she spent most of her time at the camp. Wet, chippings on path from felling, welcome banner for 'nice visitors', decided that I was one of them, so that is how I introduced myself. Four activists, 2 security guards in bender. Guards having coffee, but leave pretty soon after I arrive, they are the 'friendly' ones, im told, they give information regarding whats happening to the activists, even if they are supposed not to. Find out that the 4 (Dan - high, tall; becky - coming down, small; gav - fine, and mark(?) - active) have been up at 4am having a recce on the quarry. Also that one of the workers talk about 'if' the company begin translocation, rather than 'when'. Could be any day -but they are heartened by choice of language. That is the main concern at the mo: the beginning of removing topsoil from one field (across the road) so topfield can be translocated. However, badger set near the first field, and need court order to begin work near it. As soon as work begins, esp on topfield, then the camp will be fighting a losing battle - to delay and cost money - at the mo, still small chance of stopping it. To this end, talk of building an observation point up a tree on the edge of the copse, overlooking topfield so they can see, record, photograph an goings-on in the field. Dan is up for this, he has never built a 'proper' tree house before - fancies fulfilling his initiation I reckon! Need wood (planks) and scaffold stuff though methinks - esp as when I offer to bring stuff next time, they suggest the latter, if I have a vehicle (other things just water and bread). Noone volunteers much, but mark? is talkative, he's reading postmodern environmental ethics at the mo, edited by max oeshlager - looks good, they are all at the uni (its implied anyway), but not necessarily originally from bristol. dan's reading a book by the author of zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance, all books like this around, begin to talk about topics such as america, and stuff like that, big politics, but not mainstream stuff, stuff about awareness - pretty clear that they are either coming down, or justholding themselves up there. guess its been along day already. they empty the fire pit and we build a larger one, after ive had my tea (with milk, cos im NOT a vegan!), make mortar from wet mud and charcoal embers - dirty but quite good fun). another guy 'simon' arrives also a student, brings biccies (all vegan), he knows them pretty well, well mark and becky anyway.

I quite enjoy it, very slow and relaxing, abit like being at dave hoo's house when we were kids, would I get bored - I guess so! but as I leave the wood, get feeling that im 'coming' back to civilisation as I leave the wood, hit the golf course, reach the car, leave ac, cross the bridge, into clifton etc. Then I turn on tv - jerry springer! Find out that meetings are in the camp on wed. night - better phone foe and find out for sure.

Quite a good start - continue soon as poss.

saw sign for 'love and rockets' (ef! easter thing)

since sue wasnt there, I said I was doing a phd on env ethics and action, but NOT that I might use this experience as an example, can square this with myself since I havent made the decision officially yet, and once im IN then it wont be a big deal, cant really articulate why, but I know it wont be (maybe I can but im just being lazy!)

quite comfortable there, not just benders but proper tents too - wouldnt mind doing that. not much happens there it seems - smoke, read, sleep, do alittle things here and there, but just like couch potatoes, although outside (hooey). have to see how this perception grows...

**310398 Visit to camp**

Tuesday afternoon on the bike, stopped off to buy a loaf and some water to take up there, thought it would be a nice gesture esp if the people who I met last week weren't there, and I was a stranger. Good thought, cos they weren't! As I arrived Sue from Bristol FoE was leaving, although I didnt know it was her of course until too late. At the camp was Jo (fielding I think) and Scott, both permanent camp people, from Bristol FoE. They werent there last week cos they were off recruiting. Went to Brighton, Lyminge (only 15 people



there in the 10 camps, would be VERY easy to evict at the moment they reckon) and the Kingston (the poplar thing there) spreading the word about AC.

[had a road alert's guide to r.raging 'how to protest' in the camp bookshelf]

*what happened?*

had a cup of tea and a little chat. they said that they are always busy. just meeting people. chopping wood making benders etc. esp at w.ends. These people are quite different from the people last week, more organised, less 'high' really. More FoE people really. looking at the site for publicity and a base. planning to stay until june (when they reckon the translocation will start) but maybe until sept. or xmas. Joke about getting arrested etc. but the impression is that that will be a last resort cos they have to be onsite and there might not be any others to bridge the gap (them 2 at the least, more at w.ends, up to 30 sometimes). Although there ARE pictures of jo and security and her getting 'carried away' - so maybe... (also pictures of them in giant badger costumes, guitars, when they took an action on the quarry, did a dump on a dump truck, just nuisance rather than damage. They said that the first time they were up there they just had a look at the quarry (2 of them) and the whole work people just stopped, crazy huh! if they get within 6 feet of conveyors then they have to shut down and if they get on them then the whole thing stops. Have up to 20 security for emergencies, but maybe less normally (8?). costs Pioneer 49 000 pounds per week. Say that security are quite friendly and tell them loads of info.

Say that maybe 1200 are due over easter (from ef / rts stuff) but they play that down saying that all they are planning is a kids party with jelly and ice cream. do they know more than they are saying?

Their mates from the uni turn up on mountain bikes, all hungover from phd party. dont say much then. but their qns and a's are quite revealing.

its abit silly cos youre not 'on site': strategic: for publicity, getting people up here, keeping observation, just letting pioneer know they are there. do nuisance stuff when they put up fences etc. but this is all abit secret. Cost company money and scare them [a la gpeace on the telly and their oil rig thing] Planning to do more legal stuff - inciting unknown people to do criminal damage by dodgy translocation etc. have some hopes for this. Have no hope that translocation will work.

Cant remember much more from that bit. Hold on...mention about getting arrested and stuff and criminal records. just joke that they will get one (but not personally)...

they go...i say I have two hats etc. they say well maybe you could do this as research, 'aha!', they seem to be aware that I know what im talking about. say about meeting 630 at a/c wed night, but that not many go (ditto Monday from my experience the other day) might go I say, but id like to spend some time up there. they seem quite happy about this so ill bring my tent up.

Going quite well.

talk about RTRB, aggregates, crapness of council - she's been to a meeting that morning. usefulness of campaign - kids getting involved and stuff, should be quite good.

I think that, could I be that welcoming? could I share all my things with perfect strangers? I treasure my privacy, my time, my things. I like the air the countryside etc cos I can be by myself, with me. Could I let people share this with me? Let special people, or just anyone? Could I live in commune type place? do I prefer to play solitaire?

a/c diary weekend 11 April 98 Easter weekend.

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March.

on the Saturday was planned a kiddies easter party / egg hunt / games etc for the Saturday. this (quite bizarrely i thought) was due to coincide with a RTS event in bristol at the same time. Maybe was planned to attract a different sort of person to it, cos there were loads of kids at thge RTS thing i went to last summer; but maybe more foe type people and their kids would turn up to ac. [found out today that eager pete had phoned the site to tell them that the Friday workshops were a wash out cos of the weather maybe, and only a handful of people showed up - dan and gav didnt go]. anyway the weather on Saturday was



horrible. it was VERY cold, and the wind was a git, very chilly. i turned up about 1130, and there was jo, scott, julia and a nother person who obviuosly was a local girl (maybe foreign though, so probably a student, i didnt talk to her really, but she was there again today). jo painted her face, scott had a new toy - that loudhailer that played tunes, their parents [both sets] were due up later, but cos it was AWFULLY COLD no kids turned up. played the harmonica and cut some wood to keep busy, had a few chats and stuff, and read the love and rockets leaflet (try to get hold of one). nicky had turned up and bee, jim and gav and dan had gone to the RTS thing. [saw a HTV newscast of that later on - it was headline - tonnes of coppers, marched to the flyover, partied there but moved along to the ground there, sit in for a few hours, blocked the road, but moved on under threat of arrest. petered out protest wise after that, but went back to castle park i think. had a protester on the news saying - against roads, the cja, prisons, there are loads of things - and a copper saying they would be sure to keep it public nuisance down. maybe 5 arrests - one for a guy nicking the keys from a stopped car, one for drugs. i left the site on Saturday about loclock for footie (lost 2-1 with kev in goal, bang goes promotion). I didnt go up the Friday before, so nothing to report there, and i think ive done the Thursday one already.

### Sunday 12th easter day

cycled up to the site for about 1230, gave, sue bee and others (a guy called alistar from glasgow, a geologist on the way to the states) were at the gate to meet people who were coming for the PICNIC! it wasa nice day, actually quite warm, but it had been freezing the night before (-2 degrees) and the water on site had begun to freeze. all the usual people there, minus julia and nicky) had a chat about the RTS the day before, what ive written above really, but gav said the cops were making sure that nothing got out of hand, and that it wasnt as successful as last year - had the mandat to do that i suppose cos of the 'riot's that happened before. Trying to make out they were anarchists etc.

were given some dodgy pills yesterday, everyone was wacko last night.

this morning, people difted in to the site till about 2 oclock. who were they - people who are usually there, plus a few day visitors i remembered, looked out for helen (both film and the other, but only the former turned up for a bit at the action, and didnt stay long, asked someone and they said she didnt stay. rest of the people were kebele - linked people, had brought loads of food, and flutes, guitars, drums etc. everyone had tea - that geezer with the tartan skirt yesterday was still aorund, wearing just a cod peice today! alistair had brought up loads of stuff for the site - tape measure, knife, sharpeneing board, screwdriver, waterproofs, polythene sheets, rucksack, thermos, loads of good stuff - scott was happy.

maybe 15ish kebele people, starting peace piping and taking it easy. face painting - badger, death, eco symbols, branches (oak keaves etc) were quite good - jim patterns were good too.

alistair had experience of pollock and asked how the support was from the locals, scott said quite good, and he replied that that was dead important after the experience of pollok. a lady who was from edinburgh from was bred in bristol asked (seperately) who was born and bred on bristol. only bee. that was quite revealing, alot of us had lived there for a while, but it wasnt OUR city, where were the locals? then dan said somthing insightful - he is quite bright when he wants to be - he said that the activists up there on iste are like the tip of the iceberg, can use this idea - build it up.

another hint of the culture of things - dan, gav, bee nad jim have all been at other sites together for 'some' length of time, ie i dont know how long for.

anyway, about 2 oclock decide to make way, about 3/4 stay and site sit and the rest of us make our way up the track to the pioneer site. noone really knows whats going on. we stop half way there. sue phones about 3 different local media (probably e.post and htv, maybe the local beeb too) and also the police. she's quite sensible see and wants to have police presence there to see that security dont get heavy handed. we decide that the thing to do is creep up the side of the complex and get inside thru a fence, break thru any guards, but hopefully wont realise we will be coming, and get onto the roofs of the huts there. once there we'll play music and have a picnic. apparently the guards were expecting something to happen yesterday, so not prepared today - we'll ahve element of surprise. anyway was bout three-quarters of the way to the back of the single file of people, helping to get the food up the scree slope into the site, when the security realised what was going on. people made a mad dash for the huts, about 13 got up there, the rest of us were either stopped half way, and maybe 4/5 of us just stopped at the top of the scree realising we were buggered with the boxes etc. we just stayed there, and were told we



would be going down the slope whether we wanted to or not. but it wasn't major league or anything. they were up on the roof for about 20 minutes before security decided to get up there two (playing music etc). one guy with a dodgy shoulder apparently had it twisted by an overbearing security guy. they got a ladder and one by one got people off but it took a LONG time. we just watched. took photos. although security tried to stand in the way all the time. just watched really. as people got led away. the girls were great. jo took three of them to carry her out. bee got carried out about three times when we were on the slope. one guy got into the quarry. but it was all done quite humourously. they tried to get in. then they were taken out. we went round to the side. teased some security. one lass especially. one guy got on the back of the police van as they entered - very funny...then he legged it - same guy who went into the quarry. gave said as we were going up there that above all it's a laugh.

it's good fun. it's a media event. what will it do? rationally bugger all cos the security are there already. but that kind of misses the point. need actions to KEEP security there. give the protesters a focus. and it gives them life. hope. feeling of achievement.

anyway...there are tonnes of police there. 2 big transits for arrests. a panda car. and a land rover. at one point as many security on the roof as protesters. and maybe another 10 - 12 on the perimeter looking after us. they were quite heavy handed with the boys. but lighthearted with the girls. most of the white hats are alright. just do what they are told. but the red hats think they have authority. ditto the older ones. dum dum.

we all end up around by the gates. sporadic attempts to get back in...esp bee. and some girl who quite frantic and means it. the rest of us play bongos to a flute and guitar and violin. some guy makes up a song

"went up to a/c for a walk around. all i saw was a hole in the ground..that sort of thing" was quite good

got those pioneer blues

'who built your house' said one of the guards. made of chocolate cake we said they can't eat anything off us. maybe we spiked it!

jo. oakleaf and bee get in countless times and hold onto one another. jim in too and get carried out in the meditation position - very funny. he said before this that he wouldn't say anything to them. he'd just hum! true to his word. bee hugs one of them. then knocks his hat off!. the campers (ie the normal crowd) sit by the gates next to ECO\_CRIME banner. all done for the cameras. mostly 'our' cameras there. stills and one movie. but also a newspaper i think. but im not sure. check out western daily press and e.post on Monday. seemed to go quite well. started to get cold about 410. so i went back to the site. at the time too the cops [who hadn't done anything up till then. just watched. said that if people didn't move on then they'd be done for aggravated trespass. and since jo. bee and oakleaf didn't want to be arrested so stupidly they rolled out. then people started to eat. or take their food back to the camp. started to snow! quite heavily...i thought this might happen and so i cycled off. was getting quite tired.

- what was being at the action like? scared? fear of arrest? apprehensive? would i have risked arrest? was it likely
- most of the security knew a lot of them (well. bee. scott. sue and jo by name) so would they have taken things that far?
- how different from watching it on telly?
- did it really empower me? the others?
- was it just something to do?
- sort out some questions etc so these initial thoughts. statements can be built upon with some more considered reflections later.

back at the site anne marie and sister were there. was a bit too tired to have a talk about why they were there. but never mind. a guy who said he was into law arrived to and asked a lot about the legal. planning side of it. who owned the land etc. bcc must have sold it to pioneer at some point he said. i didn't know. i said that maybe they are just leasing the mining rights and the land will return to the city later. have to check this out properly. i said he ought to see sue (stripey green purple face) cos she'd know. have to sort out a meeting with sue. and helen. probably good to see helen first - go to the for meeting on Wednesday. if i haven't seen her before that and have a chat. tomorrow (Monday) ill go up at some point and help with the tree house.

so maybe about 30 people there today. someone giving out west country activist sheets. kebele people. rts people - saying about how the police were trying to brand them anarchists. one guy (playing the guitar with a leather jacket with red patterns on it - celtic design. was saying to sue how he was trying to sort out the people to do the free



festival so he was dead knackered.

so i reckon that the kebele, bristol ef, rts are more or less overlapping...have to at some point expand into these areas - the 9/10ths of the iceberg that is beneath the surface.

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watching comic relief later in the evening - get a good buzz. v. similar to the buzz from being on site. feel like youre making a difference - that youre life has meaning (not maybe as big as that, that your action, your day, has meaning). Not just sitting around doing empty things with no meaning. (this is real, is not a feeling cos im doing fieldwork and its a buzz from getting feild work done, cos im not looking at it that way most of the time, and anyway, its only thru thikng about it that your get stuff for fieldwork, need that reflection, which is post-event, rather than AT the time, so the buzz you get is AT THE TIME, or immediately afterwards, ie as your going home, the filedwork buzz arrives in the reflection.)

anyway, it feels like youre doing something that counts. Tow ho? to yourself? yes, to a degree. To someone else? Yes to a degree too. Made something out of nothing, made something better, something small maybe, but it had a cause and effect, it had a consequence - maybe just to be a nuisance, but it had a tangible effect there and then. Made security go crazy, cos them money. made us feel good. was a laugh. had created soemthing that before didnt exist.

Uplifting. Gives you degrees of hope that watching telly all Sunday would not normally have done.

conseq for my life?

look up btcv stuff

also the same feeling as when im taching something - feel as if i'm doing something well, doing something worthwhile. that tangible effect stuff.

#### diary a/c 130498.

just come back and im abit parky like.

anyway, went up about 1230 today, gav had been up early making a craggy island sign, the rest of them were quite late, there were two extras today who I found out were kath and nobby. they were locals but into the alternative scene, had been to fairmile (nobby) and knew about tree walkways etc, and kath had been to that old ladys bottom place. she liked it up here quite alot, got on well with bee, and promised some tat and said she'll come up to stay for abit. I brought up those newspaper articles from the weekend, prompted alot of wry jokes about the crappness of reporting, they didnt 'stop the mob' the mob moved on on their own accord. but never mind.

nobby said the guy who got arrested witht he key thing knew the man in the car, later though a guy with jim(not jim jim, a guy with glasses), cant remember his name, but a regular visitor, maybe linked to kebele, said he didnt, he was just faced and thre the keys miles away, then arrested.

jim said that there should be a bristol newspaper like brighton's evening anus / argus to take the piss and do real reporting unlike the e.post, call it the e. pants! quite amusing. turns out the the s.independent are friends of jo and it was done by phone using scotts photos. no wonder its a quite good report.

bee reckons that the spirit on the site is dead good, much better than at other sites shes been on. shes been to lyminge for about 3 weeks, same as the others if I havent written that down before - dan built a tunnel there. bee has live in bristol all her life, but has been at sites at manchester, wales etc [the w.daily tomorrow will say maybe - ill have to do proper interviews with these people. jim said later that he doesnt like saying things cos his words get muddled up so he doesnt get involved with the press, others are media tarts, see later].

we go to do some walkways. get rid of a bmx bike bunny-jump. security monitor 'protester activity' by walkie talkie and binoculars, 2 bosses watch us for a few hours. gav gets up one side and nobby the other and secure carpets then ropes the eventually a walkway, we have access to two trees quite easily now, we are a TREE'd camp! nice one!

it gets alot colder, bee and jim have been logging like crazy, have scones. kath has done all the washing up, good on her. the place is therefore quite tidy, no scott and jo yet. they have been away all day getting tat. a tat run, hopefully for the observation platform. bee is dead good talking to the locals who pass by. get them talking by just



being open and forthright, get them to agree with the camp etc, and get them to write to their mp etc. they agree to. but whether they will is another matter. people seem to want to walk on by, abit scared by us, too different maybe from the outside, but it doesnt seem like that now, but I can see why they think that. also maybe cos they dont want to be bothered, they will be though in 12 months. the noise etc and the lack of the meadow will be obvious then.

the western daily press turn up (unannounced). want to know where jo is, want to follow up the s.independent story, she isnt here so we give them a cup of tea and have a chat. they ask a few questions, get a roll call, want to know how long weve been here, will be here, normal stuff. its the same photographer (toby) as yesterday, we say we have no heirarchies, ho wwe get on with security, the action yesterday, pioneers plans etc etc. she listens alot but doesnt write that much down. its quite easy going and stuff. dont really know how much I should say, but I give them the proper info cos that would be better than them getting it woring. bee is great with them, does the food at the same time, which looks top, and they get good shots of her stirring it with 'craggy island - ah go on! have some tea' sign. seem pretty nice, want us (sue) to call them if things crack off at all. we'll see tomorrow what they report.

gets cold again, starts to snow! begins to lay! just then sue, and later glasses jim and his mate (what was his name!?) arrive. light up, have a chat. I look at road raging (get a copy, better than the net version, pictures and diagrams) to see about the knots with the blue polyprop I got from the fence this morning (put up that 'security' yellow ribbon this am too). have a chat with sue about ownership of the top field tc - council own it, leased rights to pioneer, although not in plan, they will landfill it now, planned to be quarried years ago, but only recently the landfill idea being used, as the contract to taking bristols landfill to bedfordshire is running out.

long term quarryng, must be quite successful as security, fencing etc will run into millions. she knows all about the eia stuff and the ecological things involved, get hold of that stuff soon. translocation has no successful precedents (time lag principlaly, what of precautionary principle etc???) whatof change of bird life etc with landfill, gulls etc, smell? noise??? **all these things havent been thought about. could find out about this, would be good idea)**

sue had idea of making an adventure playground near the quarry, its one of the councils ideas anyway, but it would be nice and fluffy for the camp too - walkways etc for the kiddies. gav is up for making it and it seems a good idea.sue wants to get it checked out with the council first though.

have a lvoely curry for tea, made by bee. do goat dilemma, or not as the case may be. I leave about 715. they say not staying again!!! maybe I should, but its bloody cold. they say well its up to you, being cool about it. one of these days!!

environmental art event bath community farm april 11-26 98  
kelston view twerton bath  
01225 481269 10-7 daily.

do I like the site cos its just anolvelty, will I get bored of it? maybe, cos sometimes it is quite slow. abit liek feeling good with new girlfriend, then run out of immediate things to talk about. Is there more than the immediate there? we'll see.

-----  
im doing alot on what its like to do this phd under these circumstances, but not about what its like to protest in these circumstances. And I want this quarry NOT to go ahead, so what am I doing to stop that? im getting alot of info for my phd, which is good, but the phd is also about how people go about trying to stop something, protest about something, and I need to integrate that element into it too, ie use myself, how best can I use my skills etc to help stop the quarry? be at the camp? that is a good thing (articulate why) but I can do other things too.  
best combination? camp and work?

\*\* didnt talk to the press today about 'the issues' at all really. Seen another side of it, how the press goes about getting a story, didnt really check up on figures or facts or anything.



cover 1 (date unknown)

**authenticity** 2nd time at camp. 1st time didnt go in. Issue of clique / fear / nerves. will i fit in? Am i authentic? Because i am outside the informal network. Why did i go / get over this fear?

One the grounds of meeting up with Sue Carter (local i.e. Bristol FoE) after being told on the phone that she spent most of her time at the camp. Wet, chippings on path from felling. welcome banner for 'nice visitors'. decided that I was one of them. so that is how I introduced myself.

1 310398 tuesday afternoon on the bike, stopped off to buy a loaf and some water to tke up there, though it would be a nice gesture esp if the people who i met last week weren't there, and i was a stranger. Good thought, cos they weren't!

1 310398 i say to jo that i have two hats etc. they say wel lmaybe you could do this as research. 'aha!' they seem to be aware that i know what im talking about. encourage me to come to a meeting, seem to be quite happy for me to bring my tent up. Going quite well.

1 310398 jo's friends up after phd party / mtn bikers link to 2

p7 1 people's histories

gav, dan, bee, jim manchester airport i think this was bee's first, but theyve been at lyminge and nant helen too. gav been at teignrace. can say more about this dan and gav at DWB

p8 1 local came up, seemed to agree 'in principle' but in practise he said - against pioneer, the council, the law so he wouldnt join in , and we wouldnt win. Jim said about raising awareness and costing money. Local said, it'll stop the next one, he seemed like he was local foe or something [friend of a/c link to 2 , politically aware, but not a direct activist, why?]

p10 1 gav said it would be good for people to hear about whats going on ie it should be written about

p13 1 julia ther cos she is a traveller. wants to so stuff too, but that is wahat she does, travel. but has a feeling for trees, woods says eveything is different in the woods (link to 7)

p14 1 lots of broken homes, poor troubled people. im from a quite privileged background. very counter cultural

p15 1 old geezer visitor said, theres no doubt you are brave etc - but are we/ they? what is there to be brave about [at this stage] its just another lifestyle that makes people scared, so i suppose it is being brave, being different. So i guess in a way although you are falling into a bit of a medai trap saying it is all about lifestyle, your choice of lifestyle is a political decision.

p15 1 badger helen is filming, she wants me to say something - i said no, good decision, im observing, but she asked, so that must be a good sign, must be a protester to her - good. ANd i feel like one here

p16 1 practical tensions bet academic and activist, unpack these - what i think they think, and a distanced perspective, role of the intellectual. Sci = capm, but socsci =capm? This is an argument that arise in wider academia, and i cn give it an environmental twist.

3rd space: not binary space acad/ activist, real/virtual

p22 1 would you stay here if you didnt get on with the poeple? prefer to play solitaire?

p22 1 helen talks about the battle of the beanfield, -----Priory, Molsworth (nr cambridge) ie she was part of the 1980s convoy and experienced police brutality there etc, now doing media (that vocational a level equiv)



p25 1 me and julia in charge of pit - welcome local and give her leaflet etc (shes quite nervous) but we are obvious authentic now

p30 1 helen doing a dos and donts of camp for film. been at solsbury (so has most of the local people incl. sue) also at saverake when i was there after the beanfield

p34 1 changed my mind about 3 times today about whether im ready to bring my tent up here. julia asks why i dont.. maybe i should-

no page 1 i get accepted cos i do things. i sit in the rain all day with them getting cold. i risk myself up a tree putting up the treehouse. i muck in, im there, im human. im their mate. offer them showers, food etc

p36 1 is ac members like the mwgang?

p38 1 email from badger helen. welcoming me really offering me help  
'i'd love to know more about your phd topic sometime...maybe i can help you by filling details of the ac campaign from the start 2/3 years ago...have you checked our website?

p39c 1 have a lovely curry for tea, made by bee. do goat dilemma, or not as the case may be. I leave about 7.15. they say not staying again!!! maybe I should, but its bloody cold. they say well its up to you, being cool about it. one of these days!!

p39c 1 im doing a lot on what its like to do this phd under these circumstances, but not about what its like to protest in these circumstances. And I want this quarry NOT to go ahead, so what am I doing to stop that? im getting a lot of info for my phd, which is good, but the phd is also about how people go about trying to stop something, protest about something, and I need to integrate that element into it too, ie use myself, how best can I use my skills etc to help stop the quarry? be at the camp? that is a good thing (articulate why) but I can do other things too.  
best combination? camp and work?

p41 1 idea - realised that for p. observation youre supposed to 'become' and internalise the experience etc of the activist. but the activist - its full of diversity and contradiction, loads of types of 'activist' im creating another due to my participating too. on site people do loads of roles - there isnt one that defines them being an activist over others.

p41 1 sue spent 6 weeks at solsbury - put pete in his place. he'd been there once and done 'digger diving'

p42 1 as an activist rather than a pure academic, realised the best thing i can do is support those on site and help. [respond to my ability in that particular time and place]

p59 1 Got logs on way home. I called it home! [initial reaction / reflection!]

p60 1 when dan said in conversation that everyone was listening in on that he was a student I felt that I didnt want to talk / contribute to that - found it uncomfortable. luckily conversation changed  
my positionality - ethically, earlier thought of entering security compound no thoughts of arrests etc on my behalf, if i had a banner or something i'd have gone on there equally with publicity etc - finding it easier to talk to publicise etc ive got more feeling of belonging and right to talk about it to others now. And at the dept etc, dont think about embarrassment or them not understanding cos this is more important  
[now and later I didnt really want to use the dept as a source of recruitment, I wanted to keep the things separate - why?]

p67 1 I am the case study

p68 1 neil up carer from birm - there to forget about careee who died. knew bee as a teenager - used to live in bristol



p73 1 put up tent. took up brambles but they got their revenge!

p74 1 290498 stayed at ac my first night! see next book

cover2 **geographical networks**

jo and scott on brighton recruitment (whats in brighton, and kingston poplars and lyminge 'lyminge (only 15 people there in 10 camps, would be VERY easy to evict at the moment they reckon')

road raging on bookshelf

p10 2 asked gav if they used that rraging book, he said yeah, was learning how to do tree/rope walkways. (dan had never done them before so although been at sites before, they had never been there from day one and had to help set everything up before, been there are different stages, so they all had things to learn (link to 1).

p10 2 lil says theyre alright up here - she says julia and nickey met the dongas in devon and they werent very friendly.

p25 2 trainee teacher from friends of ac comes up. he says they think theyve run their course so arent doing anymore. scott disagrees, have still loads to contribute. guy saids theres a list of people whove given money - scott hopes to get hold of it.

p24 2 pete gives out ef things for love and rockets

p26 2 julai found out about this from her bloke, but didnt really know what it was about

p34 2 people going to flyer camp at rts

p36 2 dan said he heard something was happening at bristol 'on the grapevine'

p38 2 the next 'do' is sunday 12th..this is timed to grab people who are in the action mood after Earth First!'s love and rockets event in bristol city centre saturday

p39 2 kiddies party on the saturday to coincide with the rts - for a different sort o fperson?

noone came - it was awfully cold

p39b 2 geologist from galsgow - pollock linked - brought lots of things to sunday event (easter action) said that support form the locals was dead important after his experience at pollock

p39b 2 rest of the people were kebele - linked poeple, had brought loads of food, and flutes, guitars, drums etc maybe 15ish kebele people

p39b 2 a lady from edinburgh who was there asked who was from bristol, only bee, that was quite revelaing, alot of us had lived ther efor a while, but it wasnt OUR city, where were the locals? then dan said something insightful - he said that the activists up there on site are liek the tip of the iceberg.

p39b 2 so maybe about 30 poeple there today. someone giving out west country activist sheets. kebele people, rts people - saying about how the police were trying to brand them anarchists, one guy (playing the guitar with a leather jacket with red patterns on it - celtic design, was saying to sue how he was trying to sort out the people to do the free festival so he was dead knackered.

so i reckon that the kebele, bristol ef, rts are more or less overlapping...have to at some point expand into these areas - the 9/10ths of the iceberg that is beneath the surface.

p39c 2

two extras today who I found out were kath and noddy. they were locals but into the alternative scene, had been to fairmile (noddy) and knew about tree walkways etc, and kath



had been to that old ladys bottom place. she liked it up here quite alot. got on well with bee. and promised some tat and said she'll come up to stay for abit.

p42 2 sues going to oxford for a ploughshares meeting

p48 2 showed dan and gav foe hq since they had not seen it before and it might be useful

p50 2 gav heard about ac thru word of mouth. people from kebele helped at DWB - simon and ---- so obviuosly kebele is quite important to follow up

p57 2 gav etc spent night at kebele squat. good to get away from camp somtimes.

p58 2 support networks - the dole, the co-op skip, the bishopton bread run

p60 2 guy wizard turned up - recognised him as bloke from LF form the newspaper - set up the internet thing there. he knows everyone by name. E.one is so glad to see him. get feeling its such a community and if you get 'in' ie go tot loads of sites and get on with people they remeber you - thats how the grapevine works ie not internet etc thats OUTSIDE the mvt principally for publicity etc those witin the mvt do it by face to face contacts and giving messages via people for people. flyers and phone nos. [link to 8 ] Wiz tells of mutual friends about half a dozen of them, talk of mr. kingsgton poplars. LF. tells of memorial service for guy who died at birm - loads are going

p63 2 seeing wiz - part of it all. ac is part of it all. im becoming part of it all. nice one. Good for me. good for work.

p64 2 before I started ac my efficacious range was me: personal is political. I suppose a bit of a cop out // some quote from pepper. I cant change big things (like I was when I talked to davina) so what the point in getting all angry etc.

Now at ac I feel my eff. range is bigger. im doing something. im part of something wider and im not angry - its good fun. and feeling like im doing something.. And we ARE doing something. We exist. we cost \$. we change passers by attitudes. we make people think. We make the next one harder. We are standing up for what we beleive in. we're standing up for our common ground our park our land.

p67 2 ch 4 news birm 'everything is connected'

p68 2 jo & scott went to court to support richard from mendip hills not hole / quatley quarry whose phone no was on leaflets and so was done for criminal damage at whately. no proof and he never did it.

p71 2 flyposted art college

310398 they said the first time they were there they just had a look in the quarry (2 of them) and the whole work people just stopped. crazy huh! Have up to 20 security gaurds for emergencies, but maybe 8 normally. costs Pioneer 49000 per works.

off site say jo's mates. thats abit silly? strategic. for publicity. getting people up here. keeping observatyion . just ellting pioneer know they are there. do nuisance stuff when they put up fences etc but this is all bit secret. Cost company money and scare them [a la greenpeace on the telly and their oil rig thingie]

p10 3 security said theyll come and tras the camp if they muck about with the fence ahgain - but bee reckons theyll be alright cos they have the section 6 (5000 pounds fine)

p15 3 why are we here? since we not ON site what can we protect {point that i am even asking this question. esp since i have just been authenticated by badger helen}. its a difficult answer and a difficult question since for example there are only 15 at LF so what can they stop there?]

p25 3 not much about the protest goin on. its kind of a social group thing seems to me - esp in the evening julia says that they just hang out. not like a consciuos life of struggle. but maybe. since theyre living int he woods

p27 3 bee joked yday that she said to security that if they have to resort to violence (doing over t he camp cos of the fence stuff) then theyve lost already

p29 3 i wait around for a campaign meeting, but noone from piction st turns up



p30 3 have camp meeting - drugs quietly daytime, but mainly at night. no hard stuff, no syringes, no sharing downers. do fair share of tidying, no pissing in water bottles.

p32 3 meetings been split between camp and campaign since noone from campaign comes up to camp even though evenings lighter etc. sue not happy about this, thinks will alienate the two

p36 3 diffce bet ac on sunday and rts the day before +ve -ve [re]actionary time/space nutshell macro/microcosm what for/against - level of police presence etc way reported etc etc nos of people involved

p36 3 protest costs pioneer \$, the only language they understand of protesting // td and croker interview

p37 3 bcc letter

'you are trespassing on the city council's land, camping in this location has not been authorised and should not continue'

ie just so being there we are breaking the law, it is a political way to live

p38 3 what scares me is that you seem unable to do nay meaningful form of protest now without breaking some law or toher (aggravated tresspass for example) Democratic protest has been strangled hence unlawful direct action gets resorted to by those made desparate, mad and sometimes bad!

p39 3 rts friday event workshops, noone turned up to them, awful weather

p39a 3 rts: saw a htv newsact of that later on - it was headline - tonnes of coppers, marche dto the flyover, partied there but moved along tot he ground there, sit in for a few hours, blocked thr oad, but moved on under threat of arrest, petered out protest wise after that, but went back to castle park i think, had a protester on the news aying, against roads, the cja, prisons, there are loads of things - and a cooper saying they would be sure to keep it public nuisance down, maybe 5 arrests - one for a guy nicking the keys from a stopped car, one for drugs.

[// this with epost reports, then and there and later comments and john's comments on it at the wca]

p39c 3 bee reckons that the spirit on the site is dead good, much better than at other sites shes been on. shes been to lyminge for about 3 weeks, same as the others if I havent written that down before - dan built a tunnel there. bee has live in bristol all her life, but has been at sites at manchester, wales etc [the w.daily tomorrow will say maybe - ill have to do proper interviews with these people. jim said later that he doesnt like saying things cos his words get muddled up so he doesnt get involved with the press, others are media tarts, see later].

p39c 3 we go to do some walkways. get rid of a bmx bike bunny-jump. security monitor 'protester activity' by walkie talkie and binoculars. 2 bosses watch us for a few hours. gav gets up one side and nobby the other and secure carpets then ropes the eventually a walkway. we have access to two trees quite easily now, we are a TREE'd camp! nice one! it gets alot colder, bee and jim have been logging like crazy, have scones. kath has done all the washing up, good on her. the place is therefore quite tidy, no scott and jo yet, they have been away all day getting tat, a tat run, hopefully for the observation platform. bee is dead good talking to the locals who pass by. get them talking by just being open and forthright, get them to agree with the camp etc, and get them to write to their mp etc, they agree to, but whether they will is another matter. people seem to want to walk on by, abit scared by us, too different maybe from the outside, but it doesnt seem like that now, but I can see why they think that. also maybe cos they dont want to be bothered, they will be though in 12 months, the noise etc and the lack of the meadow will be obvious then.

p42 3 weird how ideas germinate - sue's ideas about the pine tree.. grows and takes anohther shape etc

p47 3 noticed 2 helmets passing by - decided to go tease them - i red i yellow. older guy



who from sunday proved thay had no sense of humour. Dan tried to nick the grey haired ones hat - but he stood from the other guy [one who pressure pointed bee on sunday] all of a sudden violently swung at dan with his helmet, and obviously not trying to hit him, but the effect was VERY intimidating and uite shocking - a sledgehammer motion about a foot from his head SHit.

p48 gavs stuff 3 months at DWB. theyre bvery organised there / ac in comparison, needs better communal benders, he wont stay [!] but wants to make it better for people who do. he senses abit of an office / site seperation {sue!}  
get impressio that they have no real affilaition to ac. although respect and are responsible for it - arent really connected to it - just go with the flow. see what happens sort of thing. free spirits - no contacts  
somehow got impression of the downside of lifestyle. monotony of days. he said that its good that i come up - brightens stuff up abit [cold rainy e.day not alot of fun i guess!] just coincidence that met up with bee and jim - realised that site is a real creation o things from scratch. creation of lifestyle. place etc etc. it is definitely what you make it. gav and bee both say independently that what a good place ac is - so its important that the site is made okay to live on (decrease sues rants!)  
so its more than the issue - its got top be good to LIVE on esle people wopnt stay: esp as sens of loyalty is to yourself. not to the place itself [at this early stage] the actual location, maybe to earth whatever, but ill have to think about this.

p50 3 dan siad yday - its funny that security take us so seriously!

p54 3 dan got arrested for going ont he runway site at manchester (how far will people go?)

p54 3 paul harrison 'ecotage sounds like an art form i supose in a way it is'.

p56 3 talk of having another camp set up bet communtiy festival site and top filed. for jun - better publicity. people passing by will see it. strategic advantages. How did this decision come about?

Need to get people involved more. leaflets meetings she says are better intellectually minded people want more than bare facts etc. How to get them along. Need easy to do 1.2.3 ideas for people to do

Banners / schnews /

p57 3 the old gits came by when we were up the trees. good to talk to poeple. get names. makes a difference just *talking* to people. get face to face. get personal. people shy away from that but eye contact etc you make connections. poeple end up saying 'good luck' when before they'd much more likely go 'fuck off'

p58 3 went for a bimble. lookignn suspicious to annoy security we got 4 gaurds plus a lnadrover following us. webnt all round the receptor site!

p59 3 dan said we would get arresting going onto their grounds whilst they are working (aggravated tresspass) more of a risk than when not working. not worth it.

p65 3 gav sayig about problem with camp when da begins - its a publicity camp [in the main] at the mo: a visitors camp - but its also people's home. need extra space.

p68 3 wiz has brought with him a new positive vide to get things done. new walkway finished and shit pit being dug

p70 3 dans message for the kids of today 'kids should stop watching telly and do something' for helens project

p70 3 dans not worried about a criminal record cos its something he believes in {entered restricted space at manr} doesnt want to go to prison though. May just get a fine.

p70 3 stuff about doing alot of damage being up here as a camp - reminds me of what tory boy at wr / td. dan says itll take afew years to recover. but what about big hole?. thing is alienation from cause and effect we see our daamge. its not hidden.



p70 3 security guard said he'd 'have' jo anytime he wanted. rape threat - self regulated by the guards, but jo and bee egg and floured him anyway.

p71 3 sabARTage - anorak collective leaflet

p73 3 lifestyle is the issue (the media deal only with the lifestyle, not the issue) ie how do you want to live, when wherer, money earned, etc.

p75 3 types of action in form of the pledge this could be useful but havent typed it in here

p8 gave jima nd dan went into quarry last night and took down 2 days of fence work - panels and stakes - apparently caught them on film, dont really care. its just nuisance value doing the stakes, and it makes them feel good esp since it pisses security off so much. The others went into the quarry last night - gave security something to do - seems alot like cat and mouse stuff. playing tough in the school yard

p32 4 dna and gav at dwb and wales same as bee and jim and prior to that manchester. they went to manchester cos a bloke 'sooty' they met in a club in sheffield - just doing drugs and partying and decided to go up there. Dan been doing peace studies at bradford since sept. gav been squatting and protesting since last june

this one the first he's been to and been aware of th epolitiics of it - i guess before just 'been ' there. First time hes been involved in camp dynamics and aware of the 'politics' ie how decisions are arrived at etc eg role fo foe (and scared of pissing bcc off about treehouse)

p53 4 spiderman cartoon 'the idea is father to the deed!'

p53 4 what is faith woth if it is not translated into action? ghandhi

p58 4 I was saying whether the top field was a sssi or not and gav said that wasnt the point, its a filed, or a hole, and it should be a filed - ie if officially protected is not the point. he also said that the badgers were very important

p70 4 witches blessing Sunday night

p71 4 guy called ''? helped set up the camp initially but he reckoned that they had no chance of saving the meadow - but it was EMPOWERMENT. gavn hinks that alot of people are at a big point in their lives - deciding on new things. Yeah I reckon so too. Plus its the time of year spring / summer mixing together.

p9 5 jim says his dad sys he should vote but jims reply was that helll wait 50 years for the governemnt he wants.

p10 5 section 6'd site get squatters eviction rights ie use mainstream political system when it suits them

p4 5 so much of what i do is based on 'how it feels' thats so cool. beolved song - gut reactions eg field work. shouldve done that ages ago, but its now that its right, and hopefully it will be ditto women. conat force it. theres time enough

p55 5 stuff alan said about drugs - cannabis - creative, left brain, counter culture, relaxing, mellowing, other stuff - stimulus, go go drive, right brain - this is capm stuff, the stuff they let you have. so cannabis is all part of the lifestyle

p5 cold call times mag 4april 98 p8 anna blundy calls...Cate Blanchett

AB: What are you doing today?

CB: Interviews

: Do you hate it?

: Um...yeah...i do. After a while i do - everything i do is so unconscious and illogical and its hard to make it conscious and logical

p16 6



non representational theory / unspecificability

what would happen if we didn't privilege language... cognitive process for agency, conscious process. Chris Norris - self, actions habitual (about 75%) therefore much closer //s bet humans and other living things

how to deal with things that aren't cognitive? haraway, philo, walsh, animal geographies use different ways of writing / of expression, but is that enough?

there is though positives of writing: making permanent, putting into memory, so that's the point I want to make, still write, but not conventionally academically.

another 3rd space - new style for record, of discourse, not permanent, not fixed on-going, dynamic eg intertext communication, not one person's final word but a rolling record (transience)

I've dabbled in his stuff, but reached it from own trajectory, so that's a strength in itself

[look up Latour's aramis for a style for writing, Brian Goodwin, why the leopard changed its spots]

paper limited too, need interactive, multimedia engage with stuff, participation, new '3rd' experience, not definitive, participatory (link to 8)

might be that can't capture anything anyway - last quote by Abbey and Dillard hem of garment

p23 6 (but link to 4) Why do I do the stuff I do? functional, what why? cos it makes me feel good to be me, why climb tukuhnikivats? p225 because I prefer to. Because, finally, I like the name {where the sun lingers}

p44 6 when I come to write up I'll have to remember that it's better to write chronologically ie retrace initial steps of how you reached your conclusion ie state what happened

eg day at site / thought about / realised then...

ie like Abbey does - or Dillard state the facts, initial reflection, considered reflection / enlightenment conclusion

that simple, better that way ie keep it simple. HDT did insect analogies - I'll do organic ones (phd as harvesting)

p52 6 the beauty that shimmers in the yellow afternoon of October, who could ever clutch it? go forth to find out, and it is gone; it is only a mirage as you look from the windows of diligence

'we learn to prefer imperfect theories and sentences, which contain glimpses of truth, to digested systems which have no one valuable suggestion' rwe

p53 6 T.S. Eliot the burial of the dead

'April is the cruellest month, breeding

Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing

memory and desire, stirring

dull roots with spring rain

p54 6 p80 81 Dillard interior verbalisation

putting into words / the process of writing immediate reflection

p65 6 after a while / hour after hour / night and day / their endless barrage of noise / will take away / this silence forever / and this home to the wilderness / will become imprisoned in a cage of / intense noise [see 7]

cover 7 I quite enjoy it [building fire pit], a bit like being at Dave Hoo's house when we were kids, would I get bored - I guess so! but as I leave the wood, get feeling that I'm coming back to civilisation as I leave the wood, hit the golf course, reach the car, leave AC, cross the bridge, into Clifton etc. Then I turn on the TV - Jerry Springer! get slowed down, rhythmic feeling in woods, relaxed, slow (hooey's as a kid) v diffet from manic 'do' things of city / my life. Feel I am coming back to this frantic world on returning to Clifton.

p4 7 so much of what I do is based on 'how it feels' that's so cool, beolved song - gut reactions eg field work, should've done that ages ago, but it's now that it's right, and hopefully it will be ditto women, can't force it, there's time enough

p13/14 7 feel kinda cool / groovy coming home again - not cos I'm coming home, more due to



being in ac [and it being sunny] and talking about artie - real - things.

p26 7 feel good again - just cos of topic of conversation esp with julai real thing not bravado etc

p27 7 walked in vai bottom of ac saw deer. forest in bottom field looks lovely like a tall US forest. realised that WILD flower meadow is the only part of ac that has no purpose, no financial / recreational piurpose, its just there golf / mansion / walks / deer / nature trails / wood - timber, mtn bikes  
all resources - except WILD f meadow  
UNTIL NOW that capturing thing, amking civil controlled, also moeny driven from intrinsic to instrumental

p30 7 i go for a walk (need a piss) and to move the car. rain stopped and everything is lush and green. ac is gorgeous, see deer (with antlers) a crushed eggshell - hear baby birds too. wlaking down thru and down from deer park is lovely

p36 7 coming back from the outdoors - like coming back from holiday when i was a kid - feeling that things have changed laods since been away

p39 As the orange midsummer sun sets and hues of amber radiate into the evening sky, a breeze finds its way through the long grasses and flowers of the meadow. At the far edge of the meadow, amongst the trees, the camps that have been there since the final weeks of winter continue to thrive. With ribbons and banners, music and camaraderie, the camps' inhabitants celebrate the meadow and the values that it represents to them. A local woman watches the sunset, and she begins to cry. She realizes time could be running out for the camps, and the meadow itself. In the last few days, men had come to erect a fence around the field of wild flowers. The excavators will follow. A foreign multi-national is to turn the meadow into a quarry - a space for the people will become a space for profit. Later that night, the woman and her friends take down the fence.

p40 7 ive realised that im not really talking to anyone these days, but i dont mind. in fact i quite like the solitary, priavteness of it all. dont feel like im on show, on parade, tryng to be smart, good looking, presentable. i can just be whatever.

p42 7 1000s of little problems but by working together and trying different things you sort them out. quite satifying . difficult doing it when youre caned though!  
really enjoyd sortin gout the tree cutting / climbing / being outside even though it was really wet muddy and rainingg  
wasnt that cold cos i was busy - wouldnt mind doing that sort of job  
sun was setting beautifuly over the quarry and coming home the top way wa slovely. green lush english trees

p46 7 have all these ideas about harvesting whilst ... i went for a walk round the quarry. balaclavared up cos it was SO cold; [quote from clare - the envt gives you the thoughts]

p54 7 dillard bee (on pissing in a bottle in her bender in the snow first thing in the morning 'but its life affirming, its real')

p62 7 bloody gorgeous coming home - sun SKY! bristol trees - have to take photos of these just for me. For me not for work, mostly indistinguishable I know, but never mind.

p70 7 the first day of summer

p134 dillard The season changed two hours ago . its summer now all summer long. Will my life change as well? its a time for resolutions, revolutions.  
theres bflies all over, really obviuous bluebells. summer blue sky, bright sunshine sat and read. bloomin' lovely. I have to be up here to live. Things always happen around mayday holiday.

p29 8 scott wants the treehouse done by sat since the press are coming

p36 8 graffiti on roundabout 'the mob took the street'



p39c 8 I brought up those newspaper articles from the weekend, prompted alot of wry jokes about the crappness of reporting. they didnt 'stop the mob' the mob moved on on their own accord. but never mind.

jim said that there should be a bristol newspaper like brighton's evening anus / argus to take the piss and do real reporting unlike the e.post. call it the e. pants! quite amusing. turns out the the s.independent are friends of jo and it was done by phone using scotts photos. no wonder its a quite good report.

645am 13may wed bad pts and good points about site

last few days since sunday have got really larey - the security been told to up the aggression. people have been getting punched and kicked, verbally abused fro just walking across the meadow. bizarre since police are so totally on their side, theyre there in half an hour if they call them. they have so many security for so little fence. and we are so vulnerable all the time. ribbons as our defences and thats it - so they are upping the anti since the fence i sgoing up - the last few nights they have been coming in with loud hailers all through the night - 3 times last nigh 130. 245. 530 again. so weird cos theres this guy with a loud hailer swaering and effing an dblinding at us coming out of the pitch black. devilish voices, whistles, very weird - at once humourous cos its clear we're getting to them. but at the same time quite scarey if its pushed to far. if they come into camp etc.

they clearly feel threatened by us. but as pixies what can we really do? they obviuosly been told to out the frighteners on us. or they're doing if off their own back scos we are making them look silly or something. so silly. the other night someone was arrested for carying a little penknife as an offensive weapon! how stupid is that? the cards are so decked one way. and yet we're the ones who are haranged for violence etc.

1st time: kinda scarey on site - didnt know what they were going to - broke the s6. broke tarps and signs around fire pit - bizarre noises. realise you own vulnerability. and scared for bulgaria - protected by strings - if they want to fuck you over they can - your at their mecry in so many respects i fthey choose it that way. but if they are going to just break things and make noise. then noone really minds - thats part of the game in many respects - its kinda amusing

2nd time: same thing

3rd time: really awake. sense that something was going to happen. come up to my bender. its quite exposed , away from the others and the firepit. and they start rattling the tarps. but you dont know what to say cos gren and nissan rose to it earlier and then they know that its getting to you and itll come back worse at you. so i dont say anything. they go 'is anyone in there' and i go 'yeah i am' so they go ' right we'll give you a wake up call then' and you hear them take a few steps back .a bnd youre lying on he ground in the foetu sposition cos youre just been sleeping and its dark and what light there is useless cos you havent got your glasses on. and. so after their few steps you hear them run and you and they run stright thru. up and onto the bender collapsing it. and you. under the weight of the guard. so im right underneath this and can feel it all. they get up. laugh and say right same time tomorrow then. you think fuck!

the tents fucked. theyre laughing and youre glad it was no worse. but you think youre so vulnerable. no protection whatsoever. they can come in and do whatever they want with little immediate comeback - threaten , destroy. phyically abuse. its scarey. couldve been seriously injured i supposed. pretty galling.

mick says - theres going to be big comeback about this. people dont do this to people. but whatevr we do i think. they can just pick us off one by one whwnver they want. we dont have the people or the tactics or the protection of an mnc o rthe police to do anything. we're fucked.

so much like football hooligans - bullies. its kinda funny. until its turns violent. where is it going to end?

what do you do?

the other camp was okay. just rattled tarps - they wernt too scared.

i just feel ike i can do anymore up there at night - ill just go up during the day till it calms down. i guess they win to a degree there. but i dont thin il be able to stand it.

tell police. park rangers. but what can you do? eone on pioneers side. we have the moral high ground etc etc . they have their world view too and its just the blind talking to the blind - us versus them (and what a big them!) we speaking one language and theyre speaking another and they dont understand us.

and jo and scott have gone - so whose going to know what to do? retailitate?



its okay to say if they get violent then we're winning. but then the reality is that people are going to be seriously hurt and that shocks you - job mentality. they can make it as rough as they want to. there are no rules.  
become aware of your own physical fragility - small consolation that you're morally right if your physically fucked about.  
when things get tough like this you start thinking why are you involved for. why are you still doing this? but of course there are lots of things you can achieve but being less involved - optimistically you think it can be saved. but pragmatically you've seen other things that have happened and so you realise the chances are so small - and these things just go through. they may be crimes. but they just go through. the system doesn't acknowledge that it's a crime and it just happens. just like it won't acknowledge that fucking over our camp is a crime too.  
you even think stupidly at times like this how many people have to put up with physical violence and this sort of strain for their PhD?

meeting later at site: media contact / etc etc  
check relevance of injunction / s6 against guards  
get more people up - safety in numbers  
emails to Brighton ef. pagers to Totnes people  
phoned socialist worker party  
i did emails  
foe did media - did press releases  
got hold of police (filmed by Polish guy) Nancy did that too.  
Solway angry that guards took it into own hands - they're angry cos the security guards are giving us excuses to do naughty things. and so giving us more of the high ground. and the police are trying to paint us as the bad guys. but this way they can't.  
trying to arrest us for anything and everything. even though Sue was bad. it wasn't a criminal offence. only civil - same as penknife woman. so the police don't need this extra problem either making us look better  
Janyk is the Polish guy's name  
recharged his camera batteries - got his email / taped film  
Bee was really scared about this stuff. but what was really cool was she went to security to face them with it and they said got to speak to Terry. and even though she was really fucked up she did - he said he was glad that he went through him and not sorted out through retribution. and he put Mike and Mark on warnings not to do it again.  
which is not a great thing. but it's something. their boss doesn't want them to do it - so that's given me a level of security that I haven't felt all day - Bee is cool cos she is so full of it normally. but this morning she looked so scared. it really knocks you sideways.  
Jim came over when I was clearing up my tent and stuff - weird cos he doesn't volunteer much. so he was kinda being friendly and he and Bee both kinda freaked out by it - so that was nice.  
Bhelen I phoned and she said I should go to foe with the info - so I did.  
Solway phoned Pinkertons / get constable up there tonight - bit of a coup / write out statements and he'll follow them up / don't be provocative to security just phone 999 or WSM. which would be good if we had a mobile but we don't! (J&S have them both)

we have to annoy Pioneer not Pinkertons. but security are in the way so theory and practise very different and campaign don't realise this.  
also not happy about alcohol level - that's cos they only come up on party nights and so they see the excess of things  
shown the roles - Nancy etc Mandy. Sue good at office. phoning stuff. but not so good at seeing camp stuff. when they try to get involved with camp stuff rather than campaign stuff it doesn't work. and V.V. I've seemed to bridge the gap today. but it's VERY difficult.

Bhelen didn't want to go back up to camp because of the HYGIENE problems - people don't wash their hands often enough etc  
yess. but. how practical is that? question of degree and mingling etc

today's shown how there really is network that can be called upon to support a da camp in these sort of times  
- issues of violence & nonviolence to work through.  
police and their role - arresting us and protecting us in a bizarre way.  
- office people and site people\



-see response from kebele etc the next few days. email replies etc from other people

- highs are higher and the lows are lower. but instead of getting down on ourselves. we got together and sorted out a solution by ourselves. me. bee. nacy. foe etc all played their part. but set it in motion. its gives you hope. the network does. it works. we got somewhere, got something.

epost called j&s for a comment

shaun from bath ef turned up straight away.

bhelen and humpy asked me if i ever did any work for my Phd!

feeling in the camp in the morning was of despondency and FEAR

and helplessness etc and seeing bees face she was white. she was so freaked and its so unlike her. she was shitting her pants she was saying. gren was just shrugging it off. but you could tell it was affecting her but just in a different way. im quite shaken up but im just keeping myself busy. i think jim is funny about it too cos hes seen what it has done to bee and he hasnt seen her like this before (even at other sites i guess) and from that situation weve got together and sorted things out. we deserved a break and we got one. so lets hope security calm down. the security have given me a fear and i just cant stand to see them at the moment. i cant be near them. not cool.

also good example: me and bee had a moment today. when we really respected one another. she did something that she really didnt want to do but she did it. and ditto for me. and in what other circumstance would we two people get together and understand each other so fully? we did it for the good of everyone. and so when you have a common enemy. even the people you have apparently little in common with youre just brought together.

cross your fingers its a quiet night

1 talk to muriel for the first time. french student doing sociology (dissn on lets schemes) doesnt get with alot of bristol students so she spends alot of time up here. when her work allows.

p2 ive been ragin all day about income support and phd wages. I should be so proud of myself. if its all lifestyle then we all choose our own [ie not forces on us] then im 'better' than dole cos they get more and ive made something of myself

How do I run a car? Thinking of yourself on these lines ie living on income support changes a lot of your attitudes - im not a young professional. im part of the 'underclass'

p6 1 everyone (eg jim whose quiet etc) talks to you more if youre ON site. ie not visiting. more this time. more part of it. not a massive thing. kinda subtle. but perhaps significant.

p7 1 dan says that I ought to write a diary - id have anecdotes to back up points I want to make.

p7 1 get looks from people in long Ashton - kinda weird. im a pixie protester ooh scarey!

p10 1 made myself a bender from scyamore saplings got a tarp from town. elongated igloo. held down with stones. seems quite adequate. I did this all on my own - quite phased by the congratulations later. more cos I was tired and in a solitary mood. rather than anything else.

p11 1 red face - allergic reaction? am I supposed to do this? fire heat - hydrocortisone cream.

p12 1 have to sort out nvda options - what is the point of getting arrested (jo asked me at beltane if was ready for it or not)

is meadow terminal? if yes - should be here to hold her nads shoulder burden

if no and she can be saved then maybe da an option

yet. if yes. should you do more than witness. should you stand up for your beliefs? Thing is. ive never been any good at PERSUASION. I cant get people to believe in what I believe in. so what is the thing you should do? im not sure. I have broken the law for eco-stuff before. but it is pragmatic and personal / ethical decision together. Altogether you weigh up the risk of arrest. the point you can make and the success etc and the empowerment involved. ill have to just do what feels right at the time. I shouldnt get arrested for work though.



p13 1 nissan comes up - been dossing for about 7 months, but has done activism before fro about 18 months. been to LF / newbury.

p18 1 bee and jo to each other hint at the proximity of the meadow to the new camp. have you measured it yet? bee asks. im not IN on this yet.

p21 1 anne speaks of her apprehension when first came up here; dont belong etc etc but then after 10 minutes youre part of the community. she wouldnt have come in if uit werent for 'free tea' poster. I say abut I didnt even get that far first time.

p23 1 learn about the tunnel - always code 'dino' remember richard. im promoted. called by scott as im passing back from the meadow to bulgairs - see dino. nice one. secret.

25 1 phd self employed - noone giving orders. my days, my choices. annie find sit hard to work with people in offices etc ditto in a big way. view changing to phd - was embarressment etc. now proud that im doing that on a giro wage. now proud that its like being self employed. this framework is doing me the power of good: making a difference. confidnce. doings htngs myself. environment. people. creative [being in bulgaria - quiet. sun setting. just gav. jo and scott being quiet etc . very nice] getting that book to review has been good too. im becoming someone. feel like im growing up. ready to travel. career. etc. dont let business opportuntiy with anne fritter away.

p25 1 how many people have said 'dont get into trouble'

p27 1 anne changing from visitor to regular - its odd watching the chnage in someone else. after it has just happend to you. and you have been integral in facilitating that persons change.

p28 1 anne phoned feels connected to camp. cool. growing to be one of 'us' feel:s as if shes not 'authentic' but thats city talk. 'we're' different. we dont really look at things that way. we're all part of the same thing. commune-al. you dont know how longs anyone been there. so you dont know heirarchies etc - completely dynamic - rolling on every day and changing stuff all the time.

p6 2 get the feeling that kebele are just abit older and more 'mature' (is the right word. is boring. pretentious the word - oh cocaine is SO dull. darling) than dan etc - not into singing songs that are funny. want it all folksy etc. seem abit above everyone. they come and eat all our food though. even though theyve eaten already and we havent.

p15 2 mandy for is having ongoing talks with pioneer about the quarry - what about in detail I dont know. but its another type of action.

P16 Anne spoke today of how she got into green things. she spoke of how she developed her environmental and political awareness through studying very orthodox and conventional economics and politics. She then read Zakin's coyotes and town dods. that's shes given me to read. as well as Paul Watson, and Deep Ecology and these reflected the way she really felt about things.

p17 2 andy and sean here from bath EF!

p18 2 lee and jill turn up - travellers. mates of ben. been up from chichester. been to LF as recent as march - not good from what they reckon obviuos its been well organised. but fewer people now and full of brew crew. little respect for place - dumping stuff. Rank'll probalby forget about it too - ironic since siste venture up north lost 1 million last year

18 2 bee and jim joined the kebele lot at the IKEA action. jim got arrested straight away for nothing - got let off after 3 hours in police station. first thing done against ikea yet kebele 30 seconds away.

p18 2 read wood and water mystique journal

p21 2 gren MAD that kebele arent here - bee today says that what they/we are here for - we have to protect the meadow.

p31 2 try to leaflet clifton - sarah's idea (from tgrace)



p31 2 fisch and jacyck from poland - found out about site thru net - going all round the country for thesis on english EFL anthropological study to use to help kick start polish things. a road campiagn thru a forest beginning as they were leaving. shown slides b4 it of how htngs were done in UK and within a few weeks had protest site set up. sarah said its cool how the mvt teaches itself.

quentin and annie - friends of ac

sarah and dog from tgrace/ totnes - she says ac is the only protest in the sw at the moment. she reckons loads from totnes etc will come up festival time{with ucurrents too} shes on her way thru to birm - the G8. been to bingley...

sarah full of new ideas - even if she is abit yoghurt - wants to treat the securty like people - even though they are tossers - threatened me and jayck this afternoon. but its good cos it shows that your brain goes dead after a while regarding new ideas and new people bring new stimuli. new ingenuity. Why are we here? you forget. I have. can we stop it? how? what goals can we achieve? posters, letter etc done. very postive.

Bbc Wildlife feb 1997 letters [got from the doctors cos I had a red face]

alice troll a30 action

'I have lived at one fo the a30 fairmile road protest camps for almost two years and feel that I really must respond to david herdson's letter. apparently. ' a bypass built today is far more environemtn friendly' than our camps, with their treehouses, tunnels, lock-on points and underground toilet facilities.

our tree houses are lashed, never nailed to the trees. all the branches are protected with mating or thick carpet. most of the lock ons are set into the stumps of the already felled trees, and no tunnels have been dug near tree roots or badger setts.

Mr herdson could never understand the loving, respectful relationship that we have with fairmile's trees, unless he lived in them through the seasons as we have. if this, one of the uk's first privately funded road schemes, goes ahead, thousands of trees and ancient hedgerows will belost forever. Relocation of badgers has already led to at least 8 adult road deaths. Massive amounts of aggregate will be provided from open cast mining. Finally, the road will generate more traffic, ribbon development, accidents and pollution. Is this comparable to a few compost loos and tree-houses?

nicky skin (as above)

I live in a tree house on the proposed new a30 and would like to point out a few facts that David herdson missed. in reference to us scaring off wildlife, of the 14 badger setts on the bypass route, only the one next to our camp remains. also, birds still nest around us - wagtails, chaffinches, treecreepers and robins, to name but a few. I have seen deer walking under the tree I liv ein, badgers foraging, stoats playnig and a barn owl perch nearby. What could have been the same owl, I later found dead by the existing a30, hit by a apssing vehicle. mice have moved into out tree-houses, which we think might be dormice as they have distinctive fluffy tails.

We are aware that our camps do have some impact, but we are trying to keep it to a minimum. the idea that a road would be good doe the environment is ludicrous. Roads are, in effect, oil slicks on land, being made of much the same chemicals. They are slowly beeling dioxins into the land and water, not forgetting further pollution from tyre abrasions and exhaust fumes.

Anyone who says that roads are good for the environment is, to say the least, poorly informed. Perhaps my herdson should visit our camps before making assumptions from faraway lancashire.

p1 3 jo and scott building benders near meadow and quarry site. Will extend camp [again] over there. Encourage others up here - the place is growing news of fence contractors too - due to start 5th may (say security, 3 weeks to do it in) if so, plan a demo

p4 3 some decide to go on abit of an action to try to get the stuff back that the security on the nightshift (from newbury) pinched. Simon (from kebele / us accent) its abit petty; if you nick stuff youre giving them a reason / excuse to be havey handed and arrest you / all the people the on site. He cited the case of someone or other at a camp stealing a yoghurt and the site (almost 30 people) were arrested. He said if youre gonna do something you should sneak on at night and cut wires or something - youd get away with that easily. [people only comment on this when they arent here, he was at newbury, the cRED of this, you just had to be there] he understood why people get frustrated and stuff etc but...he said he hasnt done all that much pixieing [ie he is setting up his excuse for



non-action] that what we are 'pixies' as in sign on site . and on wish list - full and part time pixies wanted  
the mission came back. bee had nicked a blue hat. they had got right into the offices around the side. jim got caught and was asked how he got in. he said around the front cos the guard was asleep! theyre so slack! so all in all bee rather than simon was right - it was empowerment. made them feel as if they put one over on them. put them in their place - ie used with and wile rather than violence to square up the odds. //egg and water incident. rather than the boys way of picking a fight. Everyone was well chuffed with the mission

p4 3 simon asked what I do. and in the spirit of being proud of what I do I modestly told him abit about the phd: he says that dead interesting cos youve got one end of the green spectrum whose militant etc or with pagain. earth loving beleifs (and theire laughed at by mainstream society even thought its the only healty wat to live etc) right thru to the foe type people and locals - how do their political beliefs. ethics etc fit together and weork at the site?  
pretty us girl pregnant from kebele a witch from Sunday

p5 3 bee ranting that this is NOT a PR camp. its an action camp - what the point of having a pr camp she said? thats ue - shes not a media tart. shes a media gateaux!

p11 3 big fire got going. scott said nacy felt that the earth was anxious. they promised to help save it - vibe from the land not good. reminded me of chris gillham at td - if someone we love is terminally ill etc - no reason to walk away...expand on this

p13 3 sue got very pissed at beltane got into the quarry and climbed up the big conveyor right to the top - about 60ft. and stayed there for about 3.5 hours. had to get fire engine etc to get her down. got arrested nd bailed off site - exactly the thing she said not to do.

jo said it was stupid. achieved nothing. cos pioneer nothing. got her off site. lose money for taxpayer in form of fire engines. coul db e loss of pr for camp [quite harsh cos its sue!] and she couldve killed herself (18" wide. 60ft up. need coffee to to sober her up)

p15 3 scott has news: him and jo will move to new site that they set up nearer meadow. that will be publicity site for information etc and have craggy as peoples home. split as said other day bet. publicity and action - over there will have more passers by. more access to meadow and fencing.

Will it leave us too thin on the ground? craggy was too small for beltane but hardly ever have that many people up. Its strategic planning - temporally and spatially. build it . they will come - a la field of dreams (good chapter title)

p18 3  
ben says it better not to live on site unless youre 'doing' something - just taking up space. ie excuse for him to live in clifton and do nothing [he ate twice his own tea so jo and scott will have nothing] but he does have good ideas about blocking access roads to meadow to stop fencing.

p18 3 the people who have come up from the w.end expecting some action are disappointed - no fence today.

p18 3 lee: better being sleeping beauties until things start happening (re sue)

p18 3 gav had white lightning face at beltane

p20 3 word is out that the bbc are here...fence started yday so today we go up there and since no work is happening we start to fill in the holes - security dont really know what to do about it. public land we say. and they get in the way every time we move - ultimately their man in charge says that stupid and they back off (they were picking bee up from a hole putting her down 2 yards away and she was moving straight back again) only gets dodgy when contractor turns up. (2 men and a spade!0 he gets larey with me - threatening me . whizzes his spade within a whisker of my foot (on purpose) and throws a big stone slab at me which hits me on the thumb (whilst im on my hands and knees filling in the holes.) but hes only one guy and there are loads of us.

We carry on till we eventually fill all the holes in

cops arrive. they warn us that we are detering legal activity from occurring and if we dont leave know theyll charge us with aggravated trespass. we ahve to leave this. and



adjacent land. its the widest possible interpretation of the law. 2 guys working, 50 yards from where we are. when cops here we had stopped so no proof we had done anything. being on public land is a lawful activity too! deterring work? adjacent land? they threaten bee on camera with section 69 - 3 month off site if carried out. this happens if we wont leave. we leave.

scott says later s69 is a surprise move on their part. worse than bailing off site and arrest: over in a month. this interpretation really hamstring protest: any sort of move to stop fence at the mo will be hampered by security. warned/ 69'd/ arrested by police.

p21 3 we should do something today says bee- only thing I can think of is contractors. so im gonig to do that. (stenoak, 01823 660266)

p22 3 need to stop fence. problem no weak link that I can see. unless spread security so thin there not enough of them to stop us. we have to be careful when we play our trump cards. its a hand of poker and sue has played hers already and so she sout for a few important hands. so when to play your best cards. do you just stay in the game. or try to win. even if yuo play your best - will you win. what is the best thing to do? fence / translocation / digging when?

p23 3 jo says theres a meeting in bulgaria (we are all pixie wombles now). idea of a meeting goes down okay.

p27 3 2 camps - could turn exclusionary - abit like suburban sprawl too.

p28 3 action day

25-30 people. first thing in the morning (730). eone hungover from night before - my banner frisbee - stopped their work for about an hour

mark (securty) was full on today - we played frisbee, taunted them, they were ignorant. they tore the banner ewhere we put it. not alot we could do really. when the police were on their way they started work (so we coul dbe done for aggtress. before they just didnt bother starting). little tet a tetes occuring. bee breaking string. mud into holes. scuffles. they were saying things like 'why werent you protesting 400 years ago' and really dumb stuff like that. dumb mentality. one fat grant mitchell securty guard rugby tackled margaret really excessively. both off the ground at one point. shit.

it was decided that when the police arrived we would just leave. we were going to lock on etc but with s69 wasnt worth it - off for 3 months. and thats LONG.

p30 3

bringing moveable tracks down meadow so they can square off fence. neil bee nissan pete and andy went up to lock on and stop them got picked up and moved and went back again. andy got kneed in the back. pete got punched on the chin. neil got kicked in the back. overi n about 45 minutes. think wht it must have been like at TD and newbury - this was in the aftrenoon after the am action. people wet. hungvoer. knackered ----- road to burnout. confronting securty gaurds who ahve been done for armed robbery and are rough pub bouncers.

33 3 loads of ribbons. trip wire round bulgaria - protect dino and whole site from larey guards esp since fewer people on site.

p33 3 sarah said its funny how scared tncs get of protesters - yet they hold all the cards - all we have is commitment. people and ingenuity [hopefully]

p33 3 they are gong to build this - lets have no doubt about that. at td/ newbury had more of an anti legal case than here- only difft world view was clashing.

p2 4 had idea - caring in theory / caring in practise. what makes you cross that divide? things like:

net site - -- inspires you, captures imagination

protest site --- if you like the people there. make you feel welcome. makes you feel important and can make a difference - then you do more. ie make you cahne your theory into practise

which is kinda what happened to me here and at TD saw people doing something. empowering. inspired me to find outmore. my seed of concern just had a long gestation perios

p5 4 sue was getting tired of getting the heandbag all the time and bee slagged her off when she was in her tent and well within earshot - so next day she said she was taking a few weeks off from the here. what with richards court case and everything. but shed be back for the beltane party. sue is everyones moan. seems to be a basic human need - food water, shelter and someone to moan about.



p7 4 when we return to ac people are stripping naked and jumping over the fire (its beltane eve) what a sight! watch those flying embers! fire pit is full of poeple - fiddles guitars, accordion, witches. bee said I should strip - I gavethe traditional finger reply. Song ' someone told us / we own the land / but the one thing ive learned is / we are the land / and the land is us

p13 4 annie 'have to visualise what you want to do and you can see it being a success' 'pick a pebble off the beach and youve changed the universe' have to stay +ve about you bing able to make a difference - lifestyle choices just DO and NOT DO. she give me hope and inspiration that I dont have to fall into joe jobs I could / should travel / teach whatever.

p15 4 security have seen hern the hunter. // bees voodoo sign spooked them. chaos stuff shut down crusher for 3 weeks - coincidence? they beleive the voodoo stuff cos theres a theology grad over there.

p20 4 im writing this lying on the meadow...i was thinking last night of things to say if tv ask me: road policy plawed. housing on green belts the same flaws and this is what aggregates are used for and iif we do nee them we can recycle them. so weve got a choice. keep wild flower meadow, which is owned by poeple of bristol. for our pleasure and a habitat for wildlife, or a 100m hole and profits for an australian mnc

p3 5 Beltane Eve: fertility of the earth / hamfesting: swear vows to each other - swap something for a year and a day. my kind of marriage. witches. had 7 pointed star on meadow with fire in the middle. with erath fire air and water symbols at 4 spaces. maypole set up too

p10 5 jo and scotts hamfesting. we all went alcohol free down to a tree on the meadow edge and all stood in a circle. nancy did the ceremonials were all faced the 4 points of the compass and thanked the particular spirits of each, then the earth then the sky, and all those we didnt know about. the sunset was lovely./ jo and scott said something each. passed gifts. tied by a ribbon together. drink wine. jumpred alog and nancy said a few words. joined for a year and a day. I have to say it was beautiful, something I could do - link to ideas of marriage and wedding ive had before -

p15 5 quarry - 100m deep. into and beneath water table. take it to depth of gorge (deeper than at the mo). Bcc gave permission YEARS ago thinking that County would never pass it. they did. and bcc reneged now theyd be sued for millions of pounds which they are not willing to pay. hence their attitude towards us - let us be here out of guilt . and it would cost to remove us.

p17 5 director of parks from bcc up and didnt like the section 6 - have his legal people look at it.

P29 A local lady visits again today. she says she's walked her dog up here for years. It means alot to her because she said she senses the 'Green Man' lives up here. her friends do too. and they bike up here alot. We talk about how the concept of time feels different up here. at many different depths - intraday - days like decades. interday. seasons. years / geological time. The relationship with the land is like that with a person. it can function on a bodily, mental and spiritual plane

p31 5 pro forma letter anti quarry

p14 6 versimilitude // 1984 ideas

ive got a pocket full of wors in my brain. ill try to find something I can give to you

p18 6 jim 'reason ruins everything. if somethin is so pure and beautiful why try to reason it and give it a name'?

p22 6 the best stories arent written. theyre lived. lifestyle / discovery channel ad in st pauls

p1 7 im so drained today: but I think sleeping in the house has done me no good - so ill 'give myself to the earth' and see if she can help she does. I bike up to site. calm down. set up bed. have a guiness and sit around the



fire. Relax. Just quiet in front of the fire. I feel so much better now than say at 7oclock

So far mother earth has sorted me out. played abit of guitar. sing a few songs. had spot of conversation. looked in to the fire

p1 7 mural doesnt like interpreting peoples words into BIG theories: its cheating them she says. They wouldnt agree

3 7 its 315 am. theres fucking meese all arond my tent. what do I do? im not going to get any sleep cos theyre getting really annoying. theyve made big holes in my canvas so I either - kill them. stop them getting in. move tent.. None of which I can do now.

p20 7 ought to write some stuff about feelings spirits sacredness of this meadow before its gone.

weird stuff about being outside - clocks stopping etc - feelings when arrive and leave. sounds. senses.

p22 7 about 10pm with a fullish bright moon I go to bed. why did I ever want to live in the city? smog and fumes round triangle on wedy. traffic etc. and just rising up to ac is lovely. clean. fresh. alive.

p23 7 sense wise - you just get to the speed, pace (or lack of it the differenttness of it) of the outdoors.

as I write this on the meadow lots of insects that ive never knew existed before run across my book or come to investigate. is there life on mars? who cares?! think of all the life here that were killing.

sit in jo and scotts wedding tree. trees look different from the inside

p24 7 trying to work out mind form spirit / body is largely academic

JAMIE FINDING pennies in a tree

p25 7 in the mountains. brower lost his shyness. he was incandescent

p26 7 that is the thing about ac. not speed etc its at body/ earth time all fits together. resonates. not real a spiritual thing per se: although that comes in peaks every now and again. its a physical affinity ting. notice hourse days weeks changes. growth. how to go back to other life. house - always house drains spirit / life growth. say like andover. never like xmas at xmastime. or at other special times of year. house is house. say at hb's its difft.

is it a thing of becoming - becoming landscape. tuning intot he frequency - land season body next. soul. spirit?thats on // plane I think ive joind as yet. its physical.

spiritual stuff : hamfesting / sun etc / beltane fits into it too - that all works too. sould changes etc annes dog / bird at window / frog at food / birds flying paths./ thats works too.

difft to explan. why try? why not leave it there ---> MIND / SOUL/ SPIRIT / BODY trying to articulate the last 3. weird thing to do. why dont say body do other stuff or something. Concept of time difft - at many difft depths - intraday - days like decades. interday. seasons. years / geological time. gav time (half an hour in front of everyone else). drugtime

relp with land is like relp with woman - you connect at a no of difft levels - some more than others. at difft times. body (sex), mind (mental. ideas), spirit (passion) soul. if I have say 1 or more. likely youll get to 1st. and then it can be good or bad. but seomtmes its great.

in toen / business TIME is what you dont waste. waste ething else. up here - we dont waste a thing. apart from perhaps TIME in the conventional way.

p37 7 tourist: da isnt been there. done that (for most people) (say it si for eager pete. people dont brag etc) but noone has that attitude really a la mtn bikes. its not like a pepsi ad.

p33 7 feelings up here - yday felt cool. today hot stuffy. dept brought be down again - lost that feeling from yday. but few hours up here a - walking. sunshine sorts you out. its BEING up here. for alongtime. that is ut. maybe not the action etc thats not ething. day to day. its the bing all the importt things are here. you get none of the clutter (in houses . work / relps) and you have the essentials. Thats all you need

p19 8 everytthing we do today - water run wood chopping etc etc is filmed by helen for her promo video for work.



p21 8 look at helens video at brunel - v good. I look ill, but weird to see yourself on film and incidents that youve witnessed but from a very different perspective.  
p23 8 scott getting hold of schnews re fence

**Diaries and themes**  
**June / July 1998**

P10 1 Kay Milton 1996:2 (from berglund)  
'the environmentalist in me wants to get on with the work, to plant trees, lobby politicians, stop pollution, save the whales and the woodlands, halt the destruction wrought by the blind pursuit of profit and 'progress'. The trained anthropologist, irritatingly, wants to stop and ask questions.'

P20 1 Outsider knowledge  
Best to not say too much, better to listen. What you do say, dont be too opinionated, know what you want to say and thats it. Dont preach to those who know better.

P30 1 Jo 'youre a star jon'

P31 1 My methodology will get around the problems stated in the email discussions. I should make a very big deal of this.

P31 1 /4/ 6 Camp becomes its own self-referencing world view

p35 1 why does every other phd student i talk to (or is just everyone) ask if they accept me as a 'student'? ie me studying them?

B32 1 Ac festival Me? Incitement risk if i get arretes, (cos of emails) ive got alot to lose, not a lot to gain.

B39 1 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> reflection feeling at time: use mine / my thoughts 'ebody' will think @the same.

Cant put these words / thoughts into their mouths (3<sup>rd</sup> reflection) have to ask them. Do they have these reflections themselves?

C54 1 Car broken into up at ac lost lock!, pump, tools, tent

C38 1 Jenny visits from glastonbury -thought she'd sort me out to start work, but she underlines feeligns ive had from past few months about what life coul dbe both +vely and -vely. Good perosn to keep n contact with.

Another person who want to Do, to LIVE, not just survive etc. #

P34 1 Arsenal winning the league - can i not comment on it? That argument.

C15 1 Me and gav even had a hippie hug cos we havent seen each other for ages.

All the money ispend for site.

Couldnt help gav with a tree house, crap at heights. Got some water with ben in millie instead.

P1 2 Poland <http://www.most.org.pl/joystick/ef>

Finland <http://www.sci.fi/~ransu>

France <http://www.imagnet.fr/~onafor/ecognerrier.html>

Belguim <http://www.planetepc.fr/pcn/ECO.htm>

Holland <http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/EF/groen/groen.html>

Luxemburg <http://www.envirolink.org/action/news/Nord.html>

p6 2 undercurrents: sue pissed off anne's friend from doing ac edition. Too intense.

P17 2 Tlio network

P31 2 Pagan <http://www.estreet.com/users/brotherdavid>

<http://www.winternet.com/~robin/index.html>

p33 2 i contact, west country activist network, scrappit, dwb, making waves, kebele, bbfe.

P36 2 Big red eviction alert email

'us or ac festival, leisure services boss asked us to leave. 1 month to festival, license wont be issued whilst we are there. Eviction - illegal? Help / tat needed. People to work, or stay, support. Please, down from glastonbury or just down. Phone ffi/ hpage

to [cornerstone@gn.apc.org](mailto:cornerstone@gn.apc.org) [coniberr@cs.man.ac.uk](mailto:coniberr@cs.man.ac.uk) [rts@gn.apc.org](mailto:rts@gn.apc.org) [bjgoss@pine.shu.ac.uk](mailto:bjgoss@pine.shu.ac.uk)  
[savage@easynet.co.uk](mailto:savage@easynet.co.uk) [suoad@csv.warwick.ac.uk](mailto:suoad@csv.warwick.ac.uk) [roadalert@gn.apc.org](mailto:roadalert@gn.apc.org) [schnews@brighton.co.uk](mailto:schnews@brighton.co.uk)

p54 2 SCHNEWS 172/173 24JUNE



B14 2 Atlases of protest /action (virtual . actual)

B27 2 Sidmouth folk festival - ben good for buskers etc earn money

Wizard - guildford. weymouth visited the sites there

B33-31 2 Ac festival (Saturday)

'quarry scum up yer bum'

'quarry my arse'

bender up in ac site. Kebele foe scrappit ac sharing a stand. Scott & jo crew for bcf (tokenly)

all quiet leading up to it during the week. A few in trees but didnt need to. Very quiet. You can imagine.

A few shouts on stage and graffitti board. Eone having a good time

Margaret and jim (rts) giving out pink flyers. Rudi giving out july version of ac flyer.

Sound system was due for after festival. eone on about it.

B32 2 Ellie: hull student back from france. Done loads of da all around the country, and started some in france - french cops hardcore

B44 2 Rudi: german. given up job to be here. found out about it thru brighton people. scotts mate.

C23 2 Write letter - represents +300

So ###at protest camp represents ????

Dans tip of the iceberg.

P12 3 Bee and jim said dont park your car up the side road because security broke into nancys car and stole robes and sword. not stereo etc. Martin's car had his documents (insurance etc to get names) rifled thru. rather than stealing easy things like radio etc broke back windows.

P29 3 Flyers: summer solstice party 210698: pioneer aggregates want to blow up parks for profit. Come and celebrate the solstice and see the wildflower meadow and its eight foot steel cage. Bring musical instruments. cake. booze and anything else for a great party!

: weekend of action Sunday july 12<sup>th</sup> from 11am. Pioneer aggregates is an australian mutlitrnational company which plans to extend its quarry into a beautiful wild habitat. The meadow is now caged behind 8 foot high galvanised steel. Come and enjoy it. Come and be angry. Come and be pro-active.

B29 3 Me : going to any gathering?

Dan: no way! Dont like people aitting around talking about stuff. Prefer to do stuff.

I suppose just days upon days of meetings a la foe

B32 3 Post festie eveing: Evos version of events: alot went up 100s didnt want to leave festival. banged on fence. Horses charged. police copter he went.

Dan: nothing happened. no sound system. just too many cops.

B32 3 Jim and gren on bridge with banner - saw photo on Mondays epost. It happend on Sunday. Went up to see them. Both taken to nick for indecent exposure. Let out and gieven ride back to site!

B46 3 If cops go crazy about festival

a) site oops. Although bulgaria is gone [me ben gav go rid of it today] craggy has ALL the stuff on there. Popel could go to trees, or loack on. but he ground stuff would be trashed so it couldnt be sustained anyway.

b) B) if arrested [hopefully not cos a) loads of people. b) locals and cops wouldnt want that) they wouldnt be out asap so forget thinking about being sober for a call.

c) Building tree houses - wizard very good at this. Expertise.

d) Jims ideas fro kiky body lock ons

Get wca leaflet

B61 3 Bulgaria decided to tat down - not enough nos to stop an eviction and the police say they can stay minimally as long as dont attract pople. So all of bulgaria will go - most of craggy except for a few in the trees will stay. Bees not too happy. glastonbury was a recruiting mission but theyll be nowhere for them to stay. Will firepit etc still be



there, communal stuff. Int he end it all stays as it is and it is quiet, but bulgaira taken down and dino hidden.

Talk of big action in quarry. with scotts mates down with expertise top shut it down {at end of day though too many cops}

So: a compromise has been reached that'll probalby stave off an eviction at camp. Apparently coming to end of its life though. Paople busy, moving on to other things {quiet in august anyway, all back to normal for beginning of sept}

B64 3 Bulgaria will go so it wont be evicted. but craggy will got to the trees just in case . and get d locks made. If get evicted thatll be it - hence tlak of big fuck off action - might as well. But save dino for translocation and other days of action (rather than a permanent camp)

C57 3 Scotts bday. fear about 'tunnel' police up. but poor choice of word (under fence burrowing)

J&scott got gastric flue. Tension bet craggy and bulgaria epitomised with gav in lust with laura and j&s working too hard.

C50 3 Gone vertical Qn from kean last Thursday night - what are you achieving at site that you couldnt achieve off it? (this is a question from someone off site - significant?) Good qn - many answers of course. Why not move off? Willing to be arrested at this stage? Why force an eviction? What is best for the campaign?

If arrested woudlnt be able to come back for actions. Ben from hull and his mate said this about DWB - poeple wouldnt do any mor actions caos theyd be arrested and bailed off.

My opinion - not worth being arrested for something stupid. not worth being bailed off site. although i could do alot of good offaite (car stuff etc)

should i take down tarp? Not ogint o do any good getting it cut up. Could bring it back later.

Eviction wise - cant stop em for too long on the gground. Bolt cutters, hydrolocks. Can though int he air and uground. Poeple are doing that. Cool. But as i said, getting bailed off aint no good. Am i just being crap? Welll yes and no.

Its wrong to do the meadow, but is going to happen. But do i do myself in for it? Bad things happen - you just have to do what you can do about it (foreman / zakin)

47 3 Mrs doyle lock on is being built. Dan. jim. bee do their own arm lock ons. Bulgaria: erights people say that s6 is for dwellings only, bcc can come on when they want (not violently though) since theyre landowners ---badnews.

Good news: bcf have been in contact with bcc. Bcc now say that camp and bcf can both now coexist, bcc have said no to eviction to big issue. and hummed and harred to epost.

Sounds as if eviction is last resort for all parties. Good news.

Did all the w.up at bulgaris - dead mouse. Offered j&s shower before meeting tonight. Did all the chopping.

Just me dan bee and jim onsite - we get on so well. Good laugh.

Dlock: carabina to chain on wrist and grip metal thru pipe. Pipe up armn to stop twisting forearm from upper arm - to shoulder. Theyll pressure point you yhere if they can. Ouch. Cover pipe with wire etc - difft tools. and put difft stuff in cement for same reason. (rragin)

C44 3 Police from wsm came up Thursday morning to say 'agree to leave by wed/thu before festivcal else we'll evict you' we dont want to cos we have no £ for it - no budget for evictions and stuff. so we reall dont want to. Pioneers problem. Shortstaffed etc.

Plus said we know about 'j.m.anderson@' cos monitor websites etc my email (allsorts mailinglist? - ask jenny)

Fromlast week i sall over ewhere apparentlyl think they got it from allsorts page though. Qns of incitement / weed/ safety.

Good for campaign - bad for meme on line just for communicating...//gandalf

Jo reason we're here: cost and annoy pioneer as much as poss. . make them think twice b4 doin it again.

So we're successful then. and we're not goin to go away.

Jo said theyll talk to campers/ aign and see what they say. Meeting with bcf and bcc can copson Monday to sort it out.

We'll say 'yes we'll leave'. We'll say this ewhere 9but then gets loads of people here!

Poeple upfor arrest - jo's enthusiastic about it - but only if this is IT.



C56 3 Take food to bulgaria so j&s can have the best bits. Piss poor weather. Jos crying. but cheers up with food. Cllr comes up. Us or ac festival. Section 6? Will we leave and come back? Will they let us! Doh! Eviction alert! To mine: phone loadsa people. i cook. get calls back dead quicky. phone eone ive evenr heard of and more. Phone tree etc works really well. Up to site again with charged phones.

Pc55 3 Emails about eviction. Bimble up to site. People are p honing. theyll come for eviction. need tat though too.

C54 3 midsomer: Pick up bee & jim from theirs - jim doesnt want loads poeple coming JUST for an eviction. (esp if its a false one) thinks j&s might be overdoing it cos the camp dynamics will change for the worse.

Later that day (after a trip to clevedon) people paint faces at sitem boards for glastonbury (gav laura going down with it today). Earthrights poeple at site also on Monday. Big wicker man.

Will be small time cos poeple going to the tor at glastonbury

C19 3 Ef homepage 'if we were a load of useless hippies then all this has been done so far would not have been started'.

P30 4 Resort to ethics / beliefs - give you a right to a wrong. what you believe / feel / have faith in gives you a right to a wrong re say ac even if rational arguments give you a rel +ve / -ve

P30 4 Faith (to a degree ie worth doing it just in case) in system. that it might work. Ie tryingt o lobby enature even though you know that its useless  
Doing something is better than not doing anything. Personal empowerment.

13 4 Love etc is aproblem beacuse its person centred. Its too much for one person. theyll let you down etc. the earth wont. So love etc relps etc should be earth centred - thats the one true relp - always here etc. your world. Not a/the person

B17 4 R u oppressed? Most people dont realise they are cos theyve done well out of the system. What would make you feel as if the system doesnt work for you?  
What would make you rebel?

B35 4 First hand experience of politica / police envt/ changes your opinions. A la td: annes cousin copper. :conversation with aflynn about one ting gets you intereted and then you qn the rest. Poeple DO think that.

P6 6 Activist-(use)-----> science-(to influence)----> politics

P10 6 P125 bruno latour 1987:172

'today no army is able to win without scientists and only very few scientists and engineers are able to win their arguments without the army'.

STATE / STATistics

C48 6 Begin [like zakin etc] with idea from dillard pointed out by annie. take thing that eone identifies with, then blow it out larger to a life lession or sthing. But in this case end with qns thatthis story brings up ie eviction story or sthing from ac or just jo crying why - stones. digging. gastric flue. no sleep. fence etc written as a stpory field noted rejigged.

Then ask - why has she put herself thru this. Why does she care? Etc etc media/polcs/other people etc etc

P20 6 Model/theory - THOUGHT can describe it . HAVE knowledge

Reality / practise - ACTION - cant describe it (experience. behaviour) BEING knowlege (wisdom?)

p34 6 stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems. You shall possess the good of the earth and sun. (there are millions of suns left). You shall no longer take things are 2<sup>nd</sup> or third hand. nor look through the eyes of the dead. nor feed on the spectres in books. You shall not look through my eyes either. nor take things from me. You shall listen to all sides and filter them for yourself. Song of myself walt whitman p27/28

B6 6 All this radical rigour stuff - not to replace rigour ie just intellectual stuff. need intellectual stuff. but need other stuff too for completeness.



Cos the subject matter is radical you need a radical way of dealing with it. Else you cant explain it or do it any justice

B17 6 Copse: she writes alot about lgreen argutts (ie push congestion down the road), not all / any dgreen stuff. its as if theres arguments once won / well known etc create space for other arguments to be accepted / listened to by the mstrm. She uses emotion etc humour etc then

Q what does this say about lgreen / dgreen argutts?

A they are very closely reld highlights the vindictiveness of authies.

[this should have been written down already, if not see b17-→]

C57 6 I dont stay at site. Inspired by meadow though and i go home to read meditation and native wisdom books.

C39 6 Merrick theres a riot going on.

Even if we dont write in a technically clever clever way. its authentic. its REAL. Its coming from people who wont just tell you what it MEANS. they tell you what its LIKE. So this doesnt just win people's MINDS. it wins their hearts too.

C31 6 Abbey sunset canyon

She said. 'why the southwest?'

He told her...told her not the whole story. of course. but an outline of it. a diagram. the words as always so poor an imitation of the reality; not even in fact an imitation at all but a different reality. making what little ge remebered of his life somethig apart and seperate. in a different world.

C26 6 Why dont most ecoactivists speak deep green stuff?

Dont know it. dont agree with it. cant articulate it. dont think itll win support. socialised against it.

Seems as if what they say and what they(we) do are different

Speak light green language. Act deep green beleifs.

Why? Jeff gazzard in mr cutting file - td. jtyne etc shows that good argutt dont win. So why speak in lighth rgreen?

It DOES win support.

Try to influence politics - speak their lang. Beat them at their own game. with their own rules. But theyll just walk home with the ball.

Nearest you get to deep green in the papers is emotion / women with baby and child etc

Maybe dont say stuff beacuse its so personal. so intimate. I can only say stuff like that to people i thik will understand. or people i know. so even if they dont understd. their reaction will be not one of overt ridicule. You dont say your closest feelings to nay tom. dick or harry esp when / if you dont think theyre going to listen / ubnderstand or itll win you an argument (or lose you one). Youlive your life. and tell themwhat you think is best.

C23 6 Rachel carson in wild communion. ruth baetz. hazelden. minnesota 97.

'apparently i have never made it clear that i consider my contributions to scientific fact far less important than my attempts to awaken an emotional response to the wild of nature'

john clare in common ground. manifesto for fields. 'i found the poems in the fields and only wrote them down.

C20 6 All sites protected in scientific terms (see sonja. nature conservatin essay) so you have to try to say stuff in that lang. Sothat will try to get protection on those terms.

Eg desmoulins whorl snail at newbury Eg in ac not natl protect just stuff in legacy Eg manchester big net argutts. Eg ac aggregates argutt

Undercovering the hidden agenda (a la guildford) dont need to use difft lanf cos they can just use the wekanesses of main arguments and use on those terms. Cos its so weak and incoherent ala rtrb etc

C16 6 If radical (root of things) then arguments on webpage are quite radical in the context of libdem polcs since they cut the bs and show it to be abit of a sham. BUT if the context is wider - polcs as life / personal etc; ie different reference parametes. then it



isnt that radical.

Have to rely on kebele ef rts for that. Its like a graph with lots of hills and valleys etc and you just focus in close and see ooh thats extreme, but change the scale and zoom out and you see ethings difft.

Perhaps relevant even to evolution theories that put man at summit (and religion)

P18 7 You have to go out into the wilderness. on a quest. to really discover nature - in all its power- in a way that will essentially change you. Then. when you are home again - wherever home may be. home itself even will be an extension of wilderness itself. and you and everything you see and experience will have changed'. Anne

Roselle: we know the oppression. the loss of nature. the loss of the wild within and without.

C19 7 Went to clevedon - on return. Passed wood and quarry on road. Bloody bad it was. Akint o being truly shaken by bad news. The place knows bad things are going to happen. Have to make it better for it somehow.

C38 8 Net - local and international: national? Email lists etc :police want activists to use them so they can monitor them.

C47 8 Im on ef action update! (wed 24th june)

C36 8 Media: general comment: cant say a great deal cos have to speak the langauge of 'politics'...

Down the cakehole: big business v eco activists

Avaiation v. Air pollution

5 down cakehole - denise 'itsno one isolated thing - (audio tape)

...also because perhaps they cant really articulate it. Dont want to (?) to the faceless media?

Itsn ot inthe forefront of your mind day to day. youve thought about it once [just like exams etc if youre prepared or think about it - you know. but not cold] and you know why. But sit hard to articulate in certain circumstances.

How to use media for phd: not too good for t1. or t2. but quite good for t3. Get mengland points of view. So i guess thats good for 1. and 2. but doesnt gov eme direct activists pov.

Videos on ac. stonehnge. manr. scar. newbury. da-merrick. solsbury hill.

c33 8 with regard to media: all local stuff is the same. Of course it is - an interview with anne will prove that and i have tonnes of eggs.

National? Well. maybe difft. not really applicabel to ac but ask mandy . but ittll be generalisable - due to corporate structure etc. advertising.

See alternative media criticisms theory.

How is alternative media different?

C29 8 Alt. Media Can say what they want - but not skilled in lang. public. dissemn.. little money. few outlets.

Q: what do they say when they get a voice . what media fot hey use and why?

What about ac?

**Diaries and themes August / september 1998**

P20 1 I dont wholly agree with alex plows but i enjoy reading her stuff and life would be very dulll if we agreed wouldnt it. A good creative tension.

P39 1 How have my opinions changed / changing become more cynical / paranoid since reading the dark conclusion of 1984?

P43 1 Feel scared about police stuff on sat. Feel violated abit that i can use this personal emotion for a phd that this phd is my life is too all pervasive : even tough eda IS (iwant it to be) my life to adegree.

P46 guy at the rts as the cops waded in: 'This is so predictable. the police can easily control these events now!'

P67 1 Katrin - cant do ANYTHING with a criminal record. weight of law so strong v blunt instrument makes you wanna sit in your armchair.



P69 1 Jo doesnt go in for quarry raids since theyd love to bind her over. and scott too. All those who did this w.end were bailed off site. (sound system party + raids)

P70 1 Chris & julia manchester lyminge

Damage & ellie (!) manchester 2 germans wizard ewhere - mtv at lyminge - it girl stayed in B&B

P112 1 Thinking of mwing. saw pioneer site in andover -sand?, read scarce. how would i get ecodefense? Would tell me the best way of mwing. saw it in oxfam winchester the next day!

Is this trying to tell me something?

P9 2 Dan been to green gathering -a steward there

Meant that only jim and bee often on site over the w.end

P14 2 WCA gathering: can i sleep in a tent?

NO!!!! I just cant. What to do? Go down for the day?

P20 2 Oxford lot the other day said that reading roadbusters were shit.

P22 2 Wca gathering. Dave from tgrace: Better to light a candle than curse the universe for its darkness.

Word of mouth: no risk of decrypting etc code etc

Tgrace - model campaign - locals very anti but system did them no good. 23 / 23 wca turned up - camped. Petitioned MPs etc. Cos of respectability of NVDA and cos of local support. couldnt divide and conquer. had cpre , praish council. cllrs etc .all supported.

Deal: if leave camp. get public inquiry. John prescott called it in.

Nut nvda's leave! Oh no!

Made them stay. got them soemwhere to live . bankrolled campaign - beer etc etc

Other 'habits' made them more human (theyd be like if it they were them too) they really got into it. benders etc stuff of real life. Radicalised them! Increasingly wider shift in values. spirituality. consumerism habits.

'granarchists'

Up to 100 people camping out.

Wanted them to stay: kept pressue on - their 'scareyness' worked for them. although the locals saw thru it.

All abit 'chaotic' Had regular 'fair comment meetings

Networks - all on board. all manner of classes. types etc - all brought together by da.

Communities brought together that didnt know each other - longteem?

Crossed threshols to conservative groups - all grist to the mill.

p.inquiry- made all their sums look wrong (they were wrong) undermined economic argutt for it. Really confident will win. Change wider law?

Lawyers network too on top of that - earth rights - these doing their own form of da (respond - ability. responsibility) ¼ fee.

Jim from bristol rts: camps visibility (camp possessions etc) hostage to action though.

Better if you can fade away and squat on the hoof. Cant do alot - security can handle it - they know how to handle a camp.

OR become part of the community. squat back gardens. live in with people Increase the community. then increasing 'relate' activities.

Other groups: genetix. tgrace. ac. whatley quarry (action on Monday see jos interview). kebele. + guy from ef gathering.

Media: old dear crying 'mutiny!'

Local issue with international coverage talked media to go talk to the locals. Local tv got ny award for fairmile stuff so into reporting it. and got local +ve coverage. So alwayd be +ve themselves. All helps.

Need vocal public support

Not at ac - people dont 'relate' to them

They do at tgrace. John from kebele said that ecowarrior image works against camps for that reason - do 'swampy' thing. A stumbling block.

less diversity on site now then 2/3 years ago → is that just specifics though eg tgrace v ac, v solsbury hill

was friends of ac - but now? Steve worland interviews.



Foe not too impressive, organisation, etc  
Camp: doesnt identify with it  
Campaign fatigue  
Lack of networking even though obvious potential too.

Need orgn on site so not to waste resources. Dave - old from convey etc sthenge labour  
1969 - from anarchy, so they can control it.  
Da becoming THE politics: Farmers calling them a la french  
MPS saying its a good democratic campaign House of lrd's people phoing them for info -  
sending cars for them Local schools/ univs asking them for presentations for curriculum  
Next stage AAPOI - got agenda, need policy - guy from plannign dept in the forets of  
dean, wants to get a planning network set up //g lawyer network. This is how things get  
set up at gatherings like this.  
Need cross section of poeple to identify with, else need loads of self confidence

P60 2 Garry damaged from the eteam still around but issueing today.  
P92 2 ef gathering info from cornerstone leeds: site shepton mallett  
£10 entracne, a no dogs space, under all circumstances.  
no journalists, no cameras, no recording qpt a women only space  
some sort of alcohol restriction - decided wed am in meeting. Love and rage ef! Crew.  
P102 3 leather clad guys there from london and lf (knew ellie and bee, gav etc from  
there) trooper his name.  
They said it was a pretty nice site, like eone else! I wonder what others are like - well  
radstock is abit of a hole. They said lf has got better.

P9 3 On Monday alaska environmental contractors began to take topsoil off tope 1/3 of  
meadow. They can trah this part cos officially it isnt meadow (its a hockey pitch) but of  
course it IS a meadow. Theyre pushing it all to one side to make a high bacnk so this  
becomes another obstacle to get over, see over to mask their workings .  
Theres loads of graffitti on the fence - ellie got a caution for it.  
Yday bee & jim phoned up all the numbers they had and spent all their money too.  
I got no call from foe though. Epost came, + channel 1 cable tv.  
Plus it mustered margeret, some people from oxford (these are squatting houses before a 6  
lane road - jane, kate and a guy). The guy, since the media were here, wanted to do an  
action. Him, dan jim, jane over the fence, whilst me and ellie and this young local guy  
decoyed them. We had crowbar taken, we put rope over fence and big black security guard  
pulled the loose other end, me and this young a level matey pulled the other. Stand off  
for maybe 10 minutes. He got angry - pulling, twatted me (hard) with his binoculars thru  
the fence on my forearm (ouch!) - assault cried ellie, pulled to me more, since hegot  
angry tried to tighten grip bu slipped and caught hand on rope / fence cut himself. VERY  
MAD! Psycho tried to climb the fence - thought hed get over it and beat us up - but he  
couldnt make it - so picked up BIG stone and thre it at us effing and blinding. Kid vs  
mall (maybe 2) a few yards away fucking pyscho.  
Dan jima nd matey got nowhere near machines, picked up and taken off - got dumped by fence  
- no trouble. Jane fell badly and broke her ankle. Security / first aider helped her and  
got an ambulance to BRI (with kate) she broken 15 bones in 5 years apparently, so it was  
always a risk. Broken bones within 24 hours on site.  
Riot police turned up too late - just in case we hid all incriminating evidence (ladders)  
even thoguht no damage etc. But no search came.  
Issues: network back up - lack of it  
Security blitz Contractors - cant get at machines at any time. Protest for cameras  
Arrestable / risk Constantly filmed Even lass on the floor with swollen ankle (alice) The  
new people full of enthusiam - up for action and arrest.  
Their input good - why? What does it say about our people on site?

P34 3 Met @12 at eastville park, back up police vans @4 at jns coming up to m32 and  
the park, faces i recognised: bee margaret, diane badger helen sean john jim (rts) pete  
lairyfairy all the kebel musicians and food people  
About 1230 went down to ttesco roundabout ' not enough people' everyone kept saying. Onto  
roundabout - plice just herded people together - then got mad when people either reacted,  
or they couldnt move on. Anyone showing ANY sort of dissent eg i cant move on cos theres  
nowhere to go to a kid inthe way, a dog int he way eevntuallyll got arrested.  
Guy next to me had half a dozen coppers just piling into him - broke his bike into pieces



and carted him off. Arbitrary violence on behalf of the coppers.  
Wouldnt let us out - wanted us under control, but just freaked eone out by herding us together so eone broke out sideways and occupied far side of roundabout.  
Cops were psycho - gave no chance for us to move, i couldbve easily been arrested - arbitrary guy with bike trailer taken away.  
Again - abit scarey.  
My bike wheel buckled by cops piling in.  
Bee said quiet on site. Ellie there too at rts - she said shed been to rts in lyon - 150 or so ebnglish and some apathetic french, police warned them theyd just destroy their tripos if they didnt leave, so they had to.  
Sound system stolen / impounde from outside kebele last night - so no music.  
Guy jom from wca in a usit today bicylcing from place to place. [how he said these thigns were oragnised at the wca - just him and a few mates know where things are going to happen and its just word of mouth ten minutes before.  
Coming back from st pauls etc SO MUCH traffic  
Main m32 shut bet jn abouve and below action so just intra traffic on about m32 so the rest of it backed up to cheltenham rd / glouc rd.  
Overheard someone say: 'this is oh so predictable' - police can contril it since events this time last year - £ passed onto whitehall if 'public disorder' so they make sure it is.  
Being followed by a helicopter - was I/ wasi? Write a story!

P37 3 Countryside mvt / rally sticker on car driving on m4. (CM listen to us!)  
Using a da tactic to be heard. Da a means to an end rather than an end in itself / but can be an end in itself.  
Paul watson - law enforcement - 5 stages of policy spectrum. Da - can also be best action to get your voice heard in action and agenda stages (dave)  
So it isnt one dimensional in any way.  
Paul watson using international law as excuse to get right impact of policy (stopp killing whales) enforced. Da not just way of mkaing existing policy wokr, but also much more radical form of politics too - using exisitng policy if suits, otherwise moral policy.

P41 3 Met jim on chelt rd. Eone who was at rts fromsite got arrested, then let off on sat. Bee knocked off coppers hat! Nos going back up on site - damaged from the e team there too.

P45 3 Interesting thing is how you relate get people to identify with a protest / issue / place. Make it resonatee, become unabstracted.  
Role of friends of ac

P49 3 Arent issues such as : why protest the way you do all down to POLITICS? They are t3 rather than t1?

P58 3 How are things organised / lead etc?  
Well its just people, who do stuff as and when they get it sorted. Work it out thru process/ practise, just like this phd etc  
As like me and sarah talked it thru - disorgn / chaotics  
Is it someone you follow a la belatne - any pixies people ignored him/her, are people in a mood etc etc

P60 3 Police came this am - asked about scaff tower being built over dino (which is okay - bulgaria reopened now) - 'just for banners' but will be used for eviction type protection. All begins Tuesday (translocation)

P67 3 People doing shifts over night in dino in preperation for translocation start. Theres loads to do - eone v busy in bulgaria, i get loads of wood for week ahead in case poeple cant really leave site. Feels good to be doing stuff, feels like home. Good atmosphere  
Genny runs out of petrol, so me and jo got to clifton to get some with recylcing cans. I ask jo some questions on way back across ac - v good.  
Jim and john try to get people together for a bit of an action. Retreat better part of valour for me, but here fence banging as i head back across ac

P69 3 Anne said about ac that this is there HOME, they CARE. They set a tremendous



example. It IS their HOME, not just the baloney for nail restriction chnages...

Raids: im taking offense said dj!

P70 3 Pagan wombles

p70 3 all very busy (bitching at craggy cos theyre not its the muchnout site but by scotss own admission theyres nothing to be done there - excpet pinch all the water and cider - craggy having a debate over the quality of mens zippers).

'we're saving the world!' scott is still invisible by the way.

Its a gogreous late summer day too byt he way. clean fresh but quite warm air. Chris doing walkway workshops with 2 germans, jo and wiz tunelling. Julie site sitting etc. Damage and ellie of doing things (shagginng probably)

Hope greatest weapon. fear greatest enemy.

'i dont want to change the world. im not looking for new england' we are! We do!

P87 3 Jo rang the house yday to say could i be around fro an action tomorrow

(beginning at 830) esp for car support if people get arrested. Got up at 730 - it was great morning freshness - it was misty. noone around. clean. maybe this will be what i need to mellow outmore?

Met them all at craggy: margt and dan lock on by necks to quarry gates and big rope/dlock them to gates too so they cant open them. We sneaked up and did it. Eone had a role - writing down details if arrested / food/ decoy etc etc

Chris was told he got acught on film breaking something - hes scared, doesnt want to be pu in prison.

Anyway - media called all arrived too late: hydraulic bolt croppers took squat all time to dispense with the 'sepcial' dlock.

Press release about tunnel for release Friday sept 4<sup>th</sup> 98

Not safe to drive machinery over meadow. tunnels must be evicted 1<sup>st</sup>. People prepared to live in tunnel. fortified by scaffold tower once concealed by bender.

Specialist tunnellers needed to evict cost £1000s

Entrance ti tunnel in bcc land. tunnel under land leased to pioneer. pioneer have to get legal proceedings to council before an eviction.

A cav-in in during a hay cut in july but noone injured and damage repaired.

Aslo spikes 'long metal bars' - prevent blades from excavating machines cutting turves for removal.

Metal must be dug out etc - trnaslocation fall below acceptable standard

According to co's plan - translocation will then have to stop - thats the aim.

Photos of tnnel avail from camp.

Alaska email: alaska@farmline.com

Will bond. stokesford farm. eaststoke. wareham. dorset. bh206a1

Police arrested margt and dan. off to weston. Although epost jounrnalist / who turned up said pioneer will ake it public when they start translocation (yeah right!) thatll be when theyre hired ecologist. a dr wilson. says conditions (growing dampness etc are right) he also said the officers here (police) are okay. but we reckon its likely that both Nad and margtt will be charged (aggtress) and bailed off iste. Dan is trying to use NFA and saying he lives on site. so maybe thatll work. we'll see.

Saw alaskas macrosturfing policy. did TD. brenhyllleys. fairmile. took 28 days to do ¼ size of ac at td so how long will it take? [till dec] going to cost 1m. ]

Only have to do 'majority' so will it even get as far as the tunnel?

Maybe not for translocation, but it will for blasting. So all a matter of time.

Julie went off in a strop vis a vis alaska back with bbc crew: interviews (radio too).

They said work started receptor site (1 alaska van turned up yday: hence the action) and it had. we had a look.

So eone got the stuff they needed to do in town done today and work on the tunnel. They reckon people will come to evict etc etc soon since they know they have tunnels etc. Press release out tomorrow so they expect alot of coverage (national and local) and it all to crack off soon.

p102 3 laura phoned - dan still locke don - i have the key!

I go up with the keys chris had given to me - pooing down with the first rains of autumn. they had had hydraulic bolt cutters on them, saws etc in vices. nothing could shift it. He



went to court today - aggtress. will have trial in dec probably. said he lived on site: basic condition therefore 30 yards from fence and no allowed on longwood lane.

P102 3 Ef was not founded, it grew, its fountainhead was...

P106 3 Despite news and tv coverage, pioneer dont beleiev the tunnel exists and are doing the translocation anyway. Pioneer have done geosurveying for tunnel, but cant find it: plus can be here cos bulgaria was shut down for august. But at fairmile didnt know tunnel was there with eqpt and they were standing 8ft above it!

P122 3 Annes mate in the us had her fbi file opened when at 13 she got a book out on marxism from the library - her mates never got promoted / jobs for teaching etc in universities. she got her file years alater.

P122 4

Humility and your own spirituality will give you greater understanding if you keep it simple.

Rule no.1 none of these rules are true, make up your own.

P132 4 Turns on the concept if selfhood - instrumental in way relate to the world

P50 5 Radiohead no surprises ok computer You look so tired unhappy  
Bring down the government They don't Theydon'tspeak for us.

P2 6 realised that what im trying to do now is ways of writing ie all thge stuff on / from the apple about rigour and myths etc. How shall i write  
Idea from that book at glastonbury - have each content marker with a label of what it is ie documentary, story, myth etc

P8 6 Inspire: exert stimulating or beneficial effect, animate, invigorate, enliven, fire, touch the imagination, galvanise, imbue, infuse, inspirit, spur  
Cultivate - prepare the growth of crops, plant tend harvest impose, improve by study, education, labour, give special attention to  
Vernacular: native to a particular place - langauge dialect

P19 6 Boring old academia susbtituting past it words (ie marx or whatever) and replacing them with EF! Etc etc  
NO! Ef etc are new, radical etc, need new transcendent type of academia to deal with it - else get stuff like McKay.  
Their science is bad science, their politics is bad politics, their research (academia) is bad research.

P29 6 Ideas are like bflies, v difft to catch, instead, their energy, transform it on paper into a story. Lose seom energy, but being as efficient as possible.

P74 6 Jos interviews // songlnes. When transcribing imagine again the walk, her words, as walking . cant be seperated (aids typing up too!)

P102 6 2 colours together - new shade, 2 notes together, new chord.

P131 6 Imagination: faculty of producing mental images, waht it not present or has not been experienced. Mental creative ability.

Image: appareance icon reflection likeness representation facsimile replica concept  
perception mental picture

Imaginable : beleiveable comprehensible concievable credible

Imaginery: chimerical dreamlike hypothetical invented legendary mythological phantasmal  
visionary

Imagination: creativity enterprise ingenuity insight inspiration invention originality  
vision

Imaginative: creative, dreamy inspired inventive original poetical

P106 7

Orchids will die - it is not their place - wrong gradient etc - //transplanting // condor

P15 8 Epost of contractor action - misquoted bee (again) but she didnt care cos it made her sound intelligent. (her words)



P67 8 Epost phoned: scott says dunno when itll [action for translocation] will begin but we'll be there when it does, we'll be there to stop them, it all just sort of happen.

p70 8 htv up this am bbc on laert no move at receptor site. that will be the first sign

P93 8 New webpage accessed on net. // jo's interview - she didnt know about it being set up when i asked her last week (back end of sept)

Adrians - saw it first on sept 4<sup>th</sup>. I was 24<sup>th</sup> person to access it.

Also ac page updated - translocation work has started on thrus 3<sup>rd</sup> sept. Daily action are taking place come to camp to find out the plan for the day. No press release on there [5<sup>th</sup> oct jo put on undergd photos]

P102 8 That day bbc had turned up - offered perhaps some cameras if they get sole distribution rights. plus

Epost too. They wanted prood of tunnel existence.

P106 8 Bbctv broadcast video shot by bulgaris of tunnel (on lunchtime, ttime and news 24)

Bbc man says its the best tunnel hes seen and hes been at manr and fairmile

P113 8 MISQUOTES ETC ETC taken for granted by epost for ac scott & jo joke about it [ask annie re interview]



History of the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign (pre-EDA).

Source: The Friends of Ashton Court.

(<http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/steenson/ashton/topfield.htm>)

A Briefing on Top Park Field

Introduction

Bristol Corporation bought Ashton Court in 1959 to be used as a public open space for the benefit of the citizens of Bristol. The Corporation's minutes from that time recommend that "no portion of the park should be set aside for ... site works which would prejudice the citizens' enjoyment or detract from its value as recreational ground".

Ashton Court is an "outstanding" entry in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historical Interest in England. Avon Garden Trust says "Ashton Court is among the greatest historic parks in the country".

Top Park Field is a meadow within the estate that has a landscape essentially unchanged since the 14th century. It supports a wide range of grassland plants, is a skylark meadow and provides feeding for six varieties of bats (including the rare Leisler).

The meadow adjoins Durnford Quarry, which is mined by an Australian company, Pioneer Aggregates. Although Bristol City Council is the landowner and leases the quarry site to Pioneer Aggregates, Ashton Court falls within North Somerset District Council's planning authority.

The History of Top Park Field

1985

Bristol City Council signed an option agreement on the existing quarry's lease stating that it would use its "best endeavours" to support future planning applications.

1994

Pioneer Aggregates applied to expand Durnford Quarry by 34 acres. After lobbying, attendance at leisure services committee meetings and demonstrations this was reduced to 20 acres. Pioneer then withdrew their initial application.

November 1995

An application was submitted for the 20 acre quarry expansion. Top Park Field (named "Failand Ridge") was identified in the Avon County Council Minerals Plan as a "preferred area of mineral extraction". It was also described in the Avon County Structure Plan (named "Ashton Court") as protected under policies C4, C5 and C10.

April 1996

When Avon (the minerals planning authority) was abolished, the application was passed to North Somerset District Council.

July 31st 1996

Despite lobbying and a site visit attended by 60 objectors the council resolved to grant permission. An application by the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign was submitted to seek a judicial review against North Somerset District Council on the basis that they were misguided on: the 1995 Environment Act, which puts the onus on quarry companies to restore old workings, translocation - the suggestion that the top layer of the meadow



could be moved unharmed to another field. This rarely works. The World Wildlife Fund has stated that translocation ... is a practice for which there is negligible positive evidence". Minerals Planning Guidance Notes 7 and 14 and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15.

November 12th 1996

Roger Martin, director of the Somerset Wildlife Trust, wrote to English Nature expressing his concern over the government's discredited predictions for future aggregate needs. He criticised the government-appointed agency, Ecotec, for drawing a stright line upward prediction from the housing boom in the late 1980s. Although from 1900 to the present day (during which time we have constructed entire road systems, airports, suburban sprawls etc.) the British people have consumed 7.5 billion tons of aggregate, Ecotec's figures proposed that over the next 20 years we will consume another 8.5 billion tons. Roger Martin maintains that Ecotec's predicitions have consistently been wrong. The government has agreed to review the figures (but has appointed Ecotec to carry out the review). Environment minister John Gummer has said that he challenges the validity and sustainability of his own department's forecasts.

November 14th 1996

Roger Martin urged English Nature to intervene with the Department of the Environment to reconsider the predictions for further aggregate needs.

March 10th 1997

The application for judicial review was heard at the High Court.

March 24th 1997

Applicants were told that they would not be granted leave to appeal. This decision was not based on the merits of the evidence submitted, but was made because the applicants (although living in Bristol) were deemed not to live close enough to the Ashton Court estate, and because they had delayed their application.

March 25th 1997

The Ashton Court Quarry Campaign organised a meeting at the Hope Centre, Hotwells, Bristol. A solicitor made the legal point that while NSCD had resolved to give planning permission, the actual permission hadn't been given and that provided there was sufficient new evidence of a material nature the council would be obliged to review. Because the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign has taken the matter to a judicial review, it has no further legal opportunities. A new group, the Friends of Ashton Court, was set up to continue the campaign independently.

March 27th 1997

The Friends of Ashton Court wrote to North Somerset District Council to request a review of the decision.

March 27th 1997

Jon Gething (director of the Wildlife Trust) wrote to Nan Kirsan (chair of North Somerset District Council) to say that he believed the council had the opportunity and the reason to review the resolution to grant permission.

April 6th 1997

The Ashton Court Quarry Campaign organised a march to the quarry site. Over 150 people attended.

April 8th 1997



Basil Greenwood, conservation officer with English Nature, wrote to Kate Durston at North Somerset District Council to say he that considered the site would contribute to the national series of designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and that it would therefore be submitted it to the council of English Nature for approval to proceed with the designation process. The notification of the site as an SSSI would constitute an important new material consideration under the development plan and national planning guidance.

April 9th 1997

At a Planning, Transport and Highways Committee meeting of North Somerset District Council, Jon Gething (director of the Wildlife Trust) quoted a letter from Basil Greenwood, conservation officer with English Nature, stating his intention to submit the site for designation as an SSSI. Jon also said that he believed this made it a duty for the committee to reconsider its decision.

April 18th 1997

Judgement on the Whatley Quarry issue found (in similar circumstances to the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign application) that the applicant did have sufficient interest in spite of not living locally. At a legal briefing an individual came forward prepared to challenge North Somerset District Council's decision based on:

a material change of circumstances, and  
comments made by councillor Bibb in a radio interview that (in the applicant's opinion)  
indicated misdirection.

April 22nd 1997

A solicitor's letter was sent to North Somerset District Council outlining the individual's proposed challenge and asking the council to reconsider its decision. If the council refuses to reconsider, the individual intends to make an application for leave for a further judicial review.

April 30th 1997

North Somerset District Council confirmed that if English Nature designate Top Park Field as an SSSI they will return the decision to committee.

May 8th 1997

Valerie Davey MP, Dawn Primarolo MP and Liam Fox MP were asked by the Friends of Ashton Court to write to North Somerset District Council supporting our campaign.

May 20th 1997

English Nature decided not to designate Top Park Field as an SSSI. The Friends of Ashton Court started to investigate why, and to seek assurances from North Somerset District Council that the matter will still be referred back back to the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee at the next meeting. The three members of parliament were asked to intervene again.

May 27th 1997

Dawn Primarolo MP (also on behalf of Valerie Davey) wrote to John Prescott, Secretary of State, requesting a public enquiry.

June 13th 1997

Carol Hatton, Planning Officer with the World Wildlife Fund, wrote to North Somerset District Council explaining the experts' view that translocation is not a viable mitigation measure.



June 13th 1997

Before the crucial committee meeting on June 18th, we compiled a document to send to all Planning, Highways and Transport Committee members. We gave reasons why they should turn back the resolution:

The presence of bats.

The potentially disastrous effects on housing and wildlife in the Bristol/Bath basin caused by quarrying below the water table.

How the quarrying is likely to dry up the springs feeding the Avon Gorge, thereby jeopardising its wildlife.

The fact that the Avon region is required to hold in reserve only 25 years of landbank aggregate, but in fact has sufficient for 34 years.

Our claim that the council was misled on the efficacy of translocation.

The £3 million that BCC must add to the £12 million lottery bid would be funded mainly by

income from the quarry. Many Bristol residents seem to be unaware of this.

We believe that North Somerset District Council hasn't fully investigated the recycling of aggregates.

June 16th 1997

The Liberal Democrat environmental spokesman, Matthew Taylor, was asked to advise North Somerset District Council of their legal right to turn back the resolution and to assure them of the absence of financial liability if they have sound reasons for doing so.

June 16th 1997

The Friends of Ashton Court attended a public consultation meeting at Ashton Court Mansion prior to Bristol City Council's Heritage lottery bid. The council is applying for £12 million to enhance the estate. We raised the issue of the conflict of interests - how the estate is being preserved and plundered.

June 18th 1997

North Somerset District Council dismissed our evidence and proceeded with their intention to grant planning permission.

June 19th 1997

We made further representations to the Department of the Environment in the wake of the announcement of cuts in the road-building programme and argued that the proposed expansion goes against current environmental and transport policies.

June 25th 1997

Despite agreeing that we have sound arguments, the Department of the Environment told us that the matter will not be called in for a public enquiry.

The present situation (12th July 1997)

The section 106 agreement (which specifies the timescale and conditions and the incentives to be offered by Pioneer Aggregates to the community in return for permission to expand the quarry) has still not been signed and planning permission has not actually been granted.  
Your help is needed!



**Appendix III.**

**Draft copy of virtual questionnaire.**

The following is a draft copy of the virtual questionnaire posted to EDA-ers on the World Wide Web. This full version was tailored for each set of activists depending on which space of EDA they were directly involved in.

Please could you tick as many boxes under each section as you want, and elaborate on each answer where appropriate. Thank-you.

<b><u>Theme One.</u></b>
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Theme One specifically focuses on individual's environmental concern and action.

**Environmental Concern & Action: General.**

**Environmental Concern.**

1) Why do you care about environmental issues?

- ☐ Economic interest
- ☐ Health Interest
- ☐ Conventional-religious stewardship
- ☐ For human survival / for future generations
- ☐ Emotional / spiritual attachment
- ☐ Intrinsic Value (caring for the environment for its own sake)
- ☐ Any other (please explain)

Please describe the nature of your concern in your own words.

2) Please describe the environmental issues that concern you the most.

3) At what geographical scales is your environmental concern focused?

- ☐ Current Home Locality
- ☐ Childhood Home Locality
- ☐ Regional Locality (e.g. Political County, Natural Watershed / Region)
- ☐ National Boundaries
- ☐ European Boundaries
- ☐ Global
- ☐ Any other (please explain)

Please describe the nature of your concern in your own words.



**Environmental Action.**

4) What sort of environmental protest action have you participated in?

- ☐ Joined Environmental Organisation (please name)
- ☐ Passive member
- ☐ Active member
- ☐ Letter Writing
- ☐ Participation at a Public Inquiry
- ☐ Green Consumption (please detail, e.g. recycling)
- ☐ Supported Direct action campaign in some capacity
- ☐ Participated in direct action campaign
- ☐ Participated in illegal activity

Please expand on any of the boxes ticked.

5) Has the nature of your involvement in environmental action changed over time, if so, why?

6) Was there any particular event or circumstance that prompted you to get involved in environmental action?

7) What do you think has influenced your environmental views the most?

- ☐ Education
- ☐ Books
- ☐ Philosophical Ideas
- ☐ People
- ☐ Experiences
- ☐ Media Images
- ☐ Any other (please explain)

Please elaborate the influences you have identified in your own words.

**Environmental Concern & Action: Particular Campaign / Group.**

8) How did you find out about environmental issue that you have become involved with?

- ☐ Media coverage: National
- ☐ Local
- ☐ 'Official' notification (e.g. planning notice, government information)
- ☐ Protest flyer
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Email Message
- ☐ Internet Search



- ☐ Any other (please explain)

Comments.

9) Were you already concerned about this issue or did one/some of the above sources of information alert you to it for the first time?

10) Do you know of the existence of protest groups associated with this issue? If so how?

- ☐ Media coverage: National  
☐ Local  
☐ Protest flyer  
☐ Word of mouth  
☐ Email Message  
☐ Internet Search

Any other (please explain)

11) How did you go about finding out more about them?

- ☐ Media coverage: National  
☐ Local  
☐ Meetings  
☐ Newsletters  
☐ Word of mouth  
☐ Email Networks  
☐ Internet Sites  
☐ Any other (please explain)

Comments.

12) To what extent have you found your environmental beliefs shared by others in the group you have joined?

13) Does the group have a written 'constitution' in any form? If so, what is it?

14) What do you know about the founding of this group and its history?

15) What would you say is the main thing that holds the group together today?

- ☐ Political Ideology  
☐ The specific issue concerned  
☐ The specific environment threatened



- ☐ Social ties
- ☐ Any other (please explain)

Comments.

<b>Theme Two.</b>
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The second theme shifts focus to how individuals unite collectively in particular actions over space.

**Group Relations.**

16) On what geographical scale does the group you are involved in operate?

- ☐ Locally
- ☐ Regionally (e.g. Political County, Natural Watershed / Region)
- ☐ Nationally
- ☐ Internationally (e.g. within European Boundaries)
- ☐ Globally
- ☐ Other

Comments.

17) What methods do the group you are involved in use to network (spread information / attempt to recruit support) with other campaigning groups?

18) What, if any, other groups do you have close associations with?  
(e.g. environmental, political, social justice groups etc., please name)

19) Are there any relations between the groups, if so, how would you describe them?

20) To what extent, if at all, is campaigning co-ordinated between these groups?

**Public Relations.**

21) What methods does the group you are involved in use to network (spread information / attempt to recruit support) with the public?

22) Which methods would you say are the most successful, and why?

23) How would you describe the public profile of the group?

**Media Use.**

**Mainstream Media.**



- 25) Has the group you have become involved with had mainstream media coverage, if so, please detail the nature of this coverage (e.g. newsprint, television, local, national).
- 26) How would you describe the relations between the group and the mainstream media?
- 27) How do you feel your group has been represented by the media coverage?
- 28) Does the group frame the issue differently depending on the media involved, if so, in what way?
- 29) How important do you believe coverage by the mainstream media is for securing the aims of your group?
- 30) Has the mainstream media influenced the way you take environmental action? If so, How?

**Do it Yourself (D.i.Y.) Media.**

- 31) Have media from within the environmental protest movement covered the issue concerned? If so, which?
- 32) Does the group frame the issue differently for this so-called D.i.Y. media, if so, in what way?
- 33) What do you consider to be the role and importance of this D.i.Y. media to environmental action?
- 34) Has it influenced the way you protest?

**Internet.**

- 35) Does your group use the Internet for publicising/networking your cause, if, for how long?
- 36) Do you frame the issue differently for Internet use, if so, in what way?
- 37) Has the use of the Internet influenced the way you think about environmental issues, if so, how?
- 38) Does your group have any way of monitoring how successful use of the Internet has been?
- 39) What do you consider to be the role and importance of the Internet to environmental action?
- 40) Has it influenced the way you protest?



**Theme Three.**

Theme three seeks to integrate the above themes together in order to gain some understanding of the political significance of direct action in the 1990s.

**Views of conventional politics.**

41) What is your view of conventional party politics?

42) What has lead you to hold this view?

43) Have the forms of environmental direct action you have been involved with influenced your attitude towards conventional politics?

44) What is your view of mainstream [environmental] pressure group lobbying?

**Direct Action.**

45) How would you define non-violent direct action?

(N.B. does it involve accountability, violence to property, responsibility?)

46) What do you perceive to be an 'authentic' direct activist?

47) What do you believe the benefits are of non-violent direct action?

48) Could you describe how you think environmental/political change is most likely to come about (in the direction you would wish)?

49) How would you define Do It Yourself culture?

50) What would you say the most important outcome of your action could be?

- ☐ Individual consciousness raising and reform
- ☐ Growth of D.i.Y. / Collective action
- ☐ Environmental protection
- ☐ Radicalisation of Democracy

Any other (please explain)

Please comment.

Any other comments/ constructive criticisms etc. P.T.O.



**Appendix IV. Newspaper Archive as collated by Friends of the Earth.**

**Source: <http://www.gn.acp.org.cycling/ashtoncourt/press>.**

**Day of Action Tues 26th Aug '97**

**Bristol Evening Post 26th Aug. '97**

**PROTEST BLOCKS QUARRY'S GATES**

Environmental protestors blocked the entrance to a quarry near Bristol today.....Protestors arrived at the quarry entrance at 5.15.....Activists stopped about a dozen vehicles.....They put up 30 foot poles to block the entrance in Longwood Lane and strung banners across the road.

One of the cars turned away was driven by the company's development director, Stuart Manson....Mr. Manson who reached his office by foot said 'The quarry is closed today. It is quite usual for us not to open the day after a bank holiday.....There isn't any business being conducted'. 'But we recognise the right of peaceful protest as long as it is law-abiding'

**Weekend Camp 26th-29th September '97**

**Bristol Evening Post (\*edition) Mon 29th September**

'It was a mudbath for this peaceful protestor Dave'.....North Somerset Council has given the company permission to extend the quarry.. despite fierce opposition from environmentalists.....around 50 people trespassed onto the quarry yesterday during a peaceful protest which involved them stripping off and covering themselves in mud.

(\*\* edition)

Quarry company Pioneer Aggregates claimed the demonstrators cut two conveyor belts and emptied 1,000 gallons of oil from storage tanks at the quarry..... At a quarry protest two years ago, similar claims were made that demonstrators had released oil. It turned out it had been leaking for ages.

Bristol University zoology student Tim Chamberlain....who chained himself under the landrover....was the last to be cut free almost three hours later.....Pioneer Aggregates Development Manager Stuart Manson said 'I have been told they have severed two conveyor belts and discharged.... oil, which I regard as highly irresponsible'

**Western Daily Press Tues 30th September 1997**

**BATTLE OF THE WILDFLOWER MEADOW**

**Protestors Try to Halt Quarry Expansion**

Six people chained themselves underneath a landrover at the entrance to the quarry on the edge of Ashton Court Estate...they were cut free after 2 hours 40 minutes and taken away by police.....the day's work was delayed from 6am to 10am. Susan Carter of Ashton Court Quarry Campaign said the firm were not showing enough respect for the stone, which was a 'scarce and finite resource'.....'This is just the start. Until they make a tactical withdrawal they will be repeatedly targetted.'

**Daily Telegraph 30th September 1997**

**MUDBATH PROTEST ENDS IN ARRESTS**

Several protestors were arrested yesterday.....earlier 80 campaigners had covered themselves in mud during a peaceful mass trespass at the quarry. Managers from Pioneer Aggregates ....accused them of causing a 1,000 litre diesel spillage from a tanker and



slashing conveyor belts.....police arrested a number of protestors who had bolted themselves to a land rover. Quarry staff had to dismantle the vehicle to free them. Stuart Manson said 'We support the right to peaceful protest but.....'

**The Guardian 30th September 1997**

**PROTESTORS SLING MUD AT PLANS TO EXPAND LIMESTONE QUARRY**

Dirty tactics took on a literal meaning for environmental activists.....who covered themselves in mud during a mass trespass.....(and) stepped up their action by blockading the gates and turning lorries away....The quarry's owners, Pioneer Aggregates, accused them of slashing conveyor belts and causing a 1,000 litre lubrication oil spillage.

**Bristol Evening Post Tues 30th Sept**

**POSTVIEW**

**PROTEST SCUFFLES DID NO GOOD AT ALL**

The ugly scenes at Durnford Quarry on the edge of the Ashton Court estate will have done little to advance the cause of legitimate and peaceful protest. Six people chained themselves to a landrover and had to be cut free by police, who then arrested them. A seventh was involved in a scuffle with lorry drivers waiting to get on site. All have now been released without charge.

The protest was over plans to extend the quarry into a wildflower meadow in Top Park Field. North Somerset Council has already given Pioneer Aggregates permission to extend the quarry by 21 acres, despite substantial opposition from environmental groups.

There were also plenty of genuine local protestors at yesterday's demonstration and it would be wrong to dismiss this as simply rent-a-mob gathering. The vast majority of those opposing the quarry extension did so in a peaceful and democratic manner. However, like it or not, they were unable to win their case through the proper democratic processes. Continuing with their lost cause is not only futile but it attracts the wrong element whose tactics are more of an embarrassment than a help.

**Bristol Evening Post Sat 4th Oct 1997**

**PICTURE OF THE WEEK**

A brave Ashton Court Quarry protestor demonstrates.....beneath the landrover

**Bristol Evening Post Tues Oct 7th 1997**

**POSTBAG**

**WE'RE DOING BATTLE FOR THE WHOLE OF BRISTOL**

I find it disgusting that the Evening Post uses the expression 'unable to win THEIR case' when referring to the Stop the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign in the edition of September 30th. This isn't THEIR case, this is ours; this is our park, yours and mine and everyone else's in Bristol. How many people went to the Balloon Festival this year? How many went to the Kite Festival? Who uses the park on weekends and in the evenings? We do.

Who stands up against the wanton destruction of the park for the cause of more roads? A handful of Bristol residents and a few more dedicated outsiders. We should have nothing but respect for these people, not hammering them in the press.

The proposal is to destroy 21 acres of wildflower meadow, (as reported in BBC TV's Countryside File last Sunday) and they will be almost wiped out in the UK.



The Evening Post, in describing the campaign as 'a lost cause' has put itself firmly on the side of the continued desecration of the beautiful conservation areas in and around Bristol.

I wonder where the Evening Post will stand when the Blaise Estate or the Downs are wanted for development, or are they not close enough to home either?

Russell J. Ball, Downfield Rd. Clifton

**Evening Post 8th October 1997**

**POSTBAG**

**Direct Action is the Only Choice**

I write in response to your Postview (Tues 30th Sept) in which you condemn the Ashton Court quarry protest as having done 'little to advance the cause of legitimate and peaceful protest'. The protest was both legitimate and peaceful. Legitimate because our voices have not been heard. Peaceful because it takes a strong commitment to non-violence to remain non-violent whilst being forcibly and painfully evicted.

You say that those opposing the quarry failed to win their case through 'the proper democratic process' but there has been no democratic process. Councillor Bibb of North Somerset Council said during an interview that: 'In regard to the determination of a planning issue, even if 99% of the population don't want it, that is not a planning reason for refusal....that is the law.'

The Post also implied that the activists were not local, but I can assure you that almost all live in Bristol, unlike those in North Somerset Council who gave the go-ahead.

Direct action in this case involved costing Pioneer money. This is the language that they speak and what gives our protest substance.

Brian Chapman, Eastville

**Evening Post Tues 14th October**

**POSTBAG**

**Mass Trespass is not legitimate**

In his letter of Sept 8th, Brian Chapman claimed that the protestors' actions at Dumford Quarry were 'legitimate and peaceful'. Collins English Dictionary defines the term 'legitimate (in this context) as being 'based on correct or acceptable principles of reasoning and; authorised by, or in accordance with law'. Mass trespass on private property, criminal damage, and actions calculated to result in direct confrontation with people going about their daily work are neither legitimate or peaceful. As Mr. Chapman boasts, the protestors tactics are designed for one purpose only, that is to cost Pioneer as much money as they possibly can. He goes on to claim that 'there has been no democratic process'. Has he forgotten the public meetings where all parties were able to present their case to assembled councillors? On the afternoon-July 31 1996-those same councillors voted 10 to 8 in favour of Pioneer's plans. In stating their reasons for their vote no members said 'We have no choice in law but to approve this' Dissatisfied with the result, campaigners were able to secure a considerable amount of public money to fund an appeal to the High Court. When their application for judicial review was rejected, they asked English Nature, surely one of the most respected environmental watchdogs, to designate Top Park Field as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Following an intensive study, English Nature deemed the site not worthy of SSSI status. Our democratic process may not be perfect, but, for now, it is the only one we have. If you disagree with it, then fight to change it, but it cannot be swept aside simply because you do not agree with its decision.

Stuart Manson Pioneer Aggregates (UK) Ltd.

**Bristolians Have Not Had a Voice**



In reply to the defence of the Ashton Court quarry protest, your Editor's note said: 'The protest .....has now run its course through the democratic process'. That is precisely the point. It has not. No-one in Bristol has been consulted-the decision has been made unilaterally by North Somerset council, who care as little about Bristol as they do about the Outer Hebrides. We, the Bristolians, will suffer from this vandalism and we have never had a chance to be heard. I would have hoped that a newspaper that calls itself 'The Voice of Bristol' would have nailed its colours to the mast on this particular issue.

John Rogers  
Melbourne Rd. Bishopston

#### **Evening Post Tues 19th November**

THIS is the scene of a bitter battle which is being waged between a stone quarrying company and environmentalists. Protesters have been fighting for more than two years to stop Pioneer Aggregates extending Dumford quarry on the edge of Bristol's Ashton Court estate.

They have chained themselves to vehicles, cut conveyor belts and even played cricket in the quarry to draw attention to their campaign. They are angry because Pioneer Aggregates has won planning permission to dig - up 20 acres of parkland.

Top Park Field, a meadow containing rare wild flowers is to be transported, piece by piece, to a new site. The Ashton Court Quarry Campaign, Friends of the Earth and Friends of Ashton Court have all been fighting the quarry extension. Journalist Jackie King, of the Friends group, said: "We have all been working in different ways but with a common aim because we all care passionately about the estate. "Mountain bikers, walkers, golfers, horse riders and people who go there with their families are all concerned. I have not met anyone who wants the quarry to be extended." Environmentalists say the water table could be affected by extended quarrying and the city council, which owns the site had refused to let them see the title deeds to the estate which was left to the people of Bristol. But Pioneer Aggregates says the protesters are wasting their time and fences are due to go up round Top Park Field next month.

The quarry is expected to reach the end of its life in ten years when the company plans to restore the land.

#### **Evening Post Tues 19th November**

##### **Quarry protesters in double strike**

MORE than 50 environmental protesters were allowed to play a game of cricket at the bottom of a quarry near Bristol. Dumford Quarry, on the edge of Ashton Court Estate, is at the centre of protests about a proposed extension. Campaigners were allowed to play cricket there yesterday and today two dozen protesters were at the entrance to Dumford Quarry on the edge of Ashton Court Estate. More than 20 police and security men were guarding the entrance in Longwood Lane so that lorries could get through. In Bristol more protesters were demonstrating outside a concrete works owned by quarry company PioneerAggregates in Albert Road, St Philip's. The firm has been given planning permission to extend Dumford Quarry by 20 acres Protesters say it will damage a wild flower meadow and consent should not have been give to dig up part of a public park.

#### **Sunday Times 23rd Nov 1997**

##### **Predators begin to circle Hanson**

Speculation is mounting that Hanson, the rump aggrgates and bricks business left behind after 4 demergers, may soon be faced with a takeover bid.

Last week the company announced that Robert Hanson, son of the current chairman, Lord Hanson, was leaving his post as development director to concentrate on his family's private interests, and Hanson himself is due to step down at the end of the year. Analysts believe that the pending departures and the impending sale of the group's Grove Worldwide crane



business will encourage some of the world's biggest building materials groups to make bid approaches.

In the summer, Australia's Pioneer made an abortive attempt to open merger discussions with Hanson and may renew its interest shortly, following the sale of its oil interests. It is thought that Pioneer's initial plan was a no-premium merger in which Hanson shareholders would be offered shares in Pioneer. But that idea was not thought attractive in the Hanson camp. Pioneer and its advisors are also thought to have discussed the idea that Hanson should buy Pioneer for shares.

But the Hanson board would be unlikely to be interested in any takeover unless shareholders were paid a hefty premium-and in cash. The shares trade at 284p to value the business at £1.85 billion. But some analysts believe break-up valuations would throw up a price of more than 400p. If Pioneer or any other company does make a bid for the company, Lord Hanson is unlikely to take a sentimental approach. Both he and his late partner, Lord White, made no secret of their belief that anything within their group might be for sale-at the right price and they were often quoted as saying that if someone made a decent cash bid they "would send a limo round to collect him".

The speed with which predators make their moves on the company will partly depend on the outcome of Lafarge's bid for Redland. A number of would-be counter-bidders are watching the Redland situation closely, and if Lafarge lifts its offer out of their price-range Hanson may come to be seen as a suitable consolation prize.

Minorco, in particular, may be interested because Hanson contains the aggregates assets that the company wanted when it tried to take over Consolidated Goldfields in the late 1980s. In the event, Minorco's bid got stuck in the American courts and Hanson eventually bought and broke up ConsGold, selling its gold mines and keeping only its aggregates arm.

### **Bristol Evening Post**

**8th DECEMBER 1997**

### **HQ DEMO OVER QUARRY FIRM PLANS**

Quarry campaigners from Bristol protested in London today at plans to dig up 20 acres of parkland. Thirteen protestors occupied the foyer of Pioneer Aggregates headquarters in Harrow. Banners about the company's plans to extend Dumford Quarry on the edge of the Ashton Court Estate were hung from the roof of the building but were taken down by staff. It is the latest demonstration in a campaign against quarry extension plans. A spokesman for the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign said "The UK head office has been targetted to make the issues and strength of feeling known to the higher levels of Pioneer management"

**<http://www.epost.co.uk/news/29-sep97-p1-a1.html>**

### **Protest turns ugly**

#### **Seven arrests at quarry blockade**

by Julie Harding

SEVEN demonstrators were arrested today as protests against the expansion of a Bristol quarry were stepped up.

The protesters sealed off the entrance to Dumford Quarry on the edge of the Ashton Court estate at 6am today.

Six people chained themselves underneath a Land Rover but were later cut free and arrested by police.



A seventh protester was arrested during a scuffle with lorry drivers who were waiting to get into the quarry.

The protest, by the Ashton Court Quarry Campaign, was over plans to extend the quarry into a wildflower meadow in Top Park Field at Ashton Court.

North Somerset Council has given the company permission to extend the quarry by 21 acres, despite fierce opposition from environmental pressure groups.

Quarry company Pioneer Aggregates claimed the demonstrators cut two conveyor belts and emptied 1,000 gallons of oil from storage tanks at the quarry.

Ashton Court Quarry Campaign Protesters spokeswoman Susan Carter said: "I don't know anything about that but I can't speak for other people.

"At a quarry protest two years ago similar claims were made that demonstrators had released oil. It turned out that it had been leaking for ages."

Today's protest caused disruption to the quarry operation, with around 20 lorries forced to wait at the entrance.

Bristol University zoology student Tim Chamberlain, aged 20, was one of those who chained himself under the Land Rover and was the last to be cut free almost three hours later. He said: "There is not a lot of good meadow left in this country. People seem very keen to trash the last little bit we have left."

At one stage a protester tried to put a rope round one of the lorries and a scuffle broke out with the lorry drivers.

About 30 were involved in the protest on the third consecutive day of demonstrations. Pioneer Aggregate development director Stuart Manson said: "I have been told that they have severed two conveyor belts and discharged something like 1,000 gallons of oil, which I regard as highly irresponsible.

"It really is very concerning that a small band of people who don't happen to agree with the decision of democratically elected planners can hold so many people's livelihoods to ransom."

Lorry driver Colin Daniell, from Weston-super-Mare, said: "A lot of these lads own their own trucks.

"If they are not moving they are not earning."



**Appendix V.**

**Interview transcriptions.**

There follows the transcription of the two taped interviews that have been used in the text of this thesis. A number of other interviews were carried out, namely with Merrick (author of 'Battle for the Trees' (1997), Ade (from Warwick EF!), Lil and Julia from Earth First! (South West), as well as host of activists at Ashton Court. These latter interviews feature as comments in the field diary (see Appendix I).

**Interviewee: 'Jo', founding citizen of Craggy Island and Bulgaria.**

**Location: walking through Ashton Court, Time: September 17th, 1998.**

*how did you get involved in a/c*

finished masters...travel? agency? boredom? for my life? so get a job with experience so I'd get a better job abroad...voluntary work in meantime...foe...traffic campaigning...went to wca bath winter gathering in february...a/c...used to come mtn biking there, yeah, I'll get involved...went to wed meet...scott said they are starting work up there...had sunday meet and decided to set up a camp...within a week of deciding I'd like to get involved in direct action, I was helping to set up the camp and I've been there ever since...only reason I went to since I fell off my bike in leigh woods and was on crutches and so I couldn't go canoeing / biking etc which is what I normally do every w.end, instead I went to a MAI demo (broadmead) and they said come to the gathering it will be a good laugh (the next week) so I went...

if I hadn't fallen off my bike I guess I'd had done foe full time but worked part time...

*were you dead green / into direct action before that?*

no, I knew there was this media icon 'swampy' and I knew of the direct action campaign in newbury, but I didn't know any more about it cos I didn't really watch tv or read the papers etc, so I didn't have a lot of media input

the thing was, and I said to someone early on, 'all I ever wanted to do was change the world', me and my flatmate decided that we should start a revolution cos things are all a bit crap, political systems...it's all wrong, but the reason I didn't do anything cos I didn't think anything could be done, you could write a letter to your mp but that's just pants cos you get this letter back saying, 'yes you're right, but we can't do anything about it' this limp wristed, soft as shite reply, working at foe I'd realised that they were econoly and envtly sound policies that were sensible and workable and that there was another way besides to just destroying the planet. I'd never would have done it if I'd thought that there wasn't a better way that things could be



*continuum of foe-direct action?*

well, direct action has been quite recent hasn't it, it's only been since about 1991 that people have been doing that peace camp type thing in environmental protests. I think foe quite didn't know where to put themselves in regard to protest / campaigning, things like man. airport [where scott was, so this is where she probably got this info] they were campaigning there, so were loads of other people, man. foe separated themselves from da, since the media tried to connect them to it, to violence etc, so they tried to disassociate themselves, I think that that's one of the big contentious points, people say that foe should be doing more, they are not doing enough, should be giving us more money etc, but I think they are trying to preserve their political acceptability, you can't go around saying that this group should be doing this and this group should be doing more or differently, since one of the biggest problems is that the whole envtl. mvt has been divided a bit and it's ending up in infighting and I think that's probably quite a clever tactic on behalf of the political types and corporate owned media..cos media isn't this independent thing, it's something with its own agenda, perhaps the journalists individually are thinking 'yeah, good for them', but their editorial control is from a corporate viewpoint...if they go up and ask [foe] do you approve of this action, they're not going to say, 'yeah, good on them, go and beat up a security guard or burn some machinery' cos they are trying to maintain they're mainstream acceptability...

*media here?*

they've been very positive about this, we've had no media hostility towards us, it has all been like, 'yeah good for you' but the thing is that they have this way of trivialising everything...you do this interview with people and you go on about employment issues, waste issues, recycling... and what they write about is what your mother thinks of you being out here with dirty finger nails, they want to make you into something, what label can be put onto these people, either you're a fluffy hippy, or you're a dole scrounging hard core criminal scumbag, and they can't sort of accept that fact that you're there cos you're concerned about something and write about what you're concerned about, I don't think these things have been in any of the papers.

Venue did an interview with scott and me, which was really good, which was more about the issues, but there this cartoon that kate evans did, it was wicked, 'brave eco warrior drinking tea in the name of planetary salvation' and that's it, they always want to go on about 'how far are you prepared to go,' just like the evening post asked us yesterday, how far are you prepared to go to stop the quarry...'



*own media good then?*

yeah, schnews, ef action update, the wca is incredibly important as thats how you reach the activists, whereas the e.post / htv / bbc newswest type stuff is how you reach the people sitting in their living rooms, i mean we do get visitors from e.post type readers, and especially venue, the venue article got us alot of visitors, but its a totally different audience, the type of people that are going to come up and are going to break stuff (!) are not going to have read it in the e.post, and gone ooh thats looks like fun! but i think they are both important, youre more likely to get youre own point of view across in something liek schnews. and the websites are good beacuse you are doing it yourself and you can reach alot of people, but of course youve got the problem that the police read our website and the quarry people read our website - for the festival we put on there our plans to tat down etc etc and they read it and thought, yeah its okay they ARE going to tat down cos its on the website and we totally didnt.

It was quite funny the other day, this guy came into the camp - normal guy etc etc - but he asked a weird question, he asked 'has anyone here had trouble from security [stuff from that had been on the web] and ellie told a story [about that black guard throwing stones at me and her, although jo didnt realise it was me] cos he wants to set up his own website with things like this on it, but it was weird cos he had come out of this computer world, with all these sentences and stuff, and he was planning to take all this stuff back into his little computer world, and although i hesitate to say it, all this stuff from the 'real world', cos people think of that as suburbia etc, but it was like he'd been transplanted from one timezone to another. It was like someone had stepped out of a time machine and gone 'ooh yes the thirteenth century, this looks like fun!' bizarre, two different worlds! [wizard was doing stuff though in LF on computers, but like he sald at ac in dino, he only does stuff that interests him, he explores things that could have potential, so it wa slike he was teaching himself something about it to keep him amused, learning, i can relate to that]

*political / environmental ideology?*

i came out here and you meet people with all different views, most people are anarchists, but there are socialist etc, all these words with -ists on the end, oh so and so are reformist etc they just want to change bits within the system, but we want to tear down the system and all this sort of stuff! so i thought oh, id better read stuff about anarchy and see if i am an anarchist cos i like to know what im arguing about, i didnt just want to turn up at the camp and say 'its shit, they are digging a quarry, i wanted to know about translocation issues and information about this that and the other...



i ended up having this big argument with my nan and my mother going on about 'the system's shit' and going on about the march against the monarchy etc etc and theyt sald, 'oh i suppose you want a clinton style republic' and i thought what? me! want everything clinton style, i dont think so!

i dont know, i've never really gone, right this is MY political view, ive always voted for the green party cos you know they are never going to win, but X number of votes for the greens, say 100 votes for the green party, and its only 100 votes between two bigger parties, they'll think, right we'd better get the green vote, y'no what i mean [we can get those to alter their policies to win the extra votes] it worked say in the 80s...

*view on arrest / morality and law*

my view? well, i did A level psychology, and they have these models for developing your own system of morality which doesnt involve whether you are going to get caught, and whether your going to break the law, and thats supposed to be a higher stage of moral development...i used to sit there and think, oh thats shit, i'll write a letter about it, but that letter didnt do anything, and okay you could not buy something and you could write and say why youre not buying something, but at the end of the day youre still perpetuating things instead of going out and changing them, d'ya know what i mean. i think that, if you look at that place [the quarry] they're only motivation is money, making money...

i do think that direct action is the only way to change things really, cos if you look at newbury and stuff, people being directly in the way of someone trying do something that the law allows them to do, but is blatantly, totally wrong, the policies are not economically sound and they are destroying the planet. that quotation, utah phillips is it? 'the earth is not dying, its being killed' y'no politician and corporations, they are the same people, mostly politicians have alot of industrial interests and they are more interested in serving them, getting short term big profits, and it is this sort of thing that they put in as their policies. you think, you can ask them all you like to change things, but at the end of the day they are not going to because it doesn't suit them, and by physically being int heir way, and costing them money - cos that the th9ing theyre doing it for, if you can cost them money and make it impossible for them to work a society that is organised solely for their benefit then sooner or later its going to be more effective than anything else, and its certainly better than just sitting there and doing nothing. Times like when a few weeks ago, after the summer WCA gathering, we went down to Meerhead quarry which is one of the biggest quarries in Europe, and we walked in there! there was only about 40 of us, so it wasnt that big, but there were more of us than there were people to stop us, so we walked in and got on all their machines, jumped on and off their weighbridge, and we could even talk to the owner since she was driving up in her car as we were there, and without a word we all just spread out across the road to stop this executive



type car driving towards us, and someone said, ;thats angela yeoman! wahey! and we clambered over her car and people ranted at the thought the windows. you never get the opportunity to get to the person who MOST benefits from it and is most directly doing it and they are the people who want to extend their quarries, you generally dont get to talk to them about it [lobby them i guess, in their own way] so it was really, [well], empowering, that is the right word for it [seems hesitant to use this word since probably cos fo its (over)use by the media] cos we walked right in and closed it down, and they were going like 'oh shlt we cant do anything, there's too many of them, theyve closed us down!' and it was like, well okay in the long term it might not have achieved a much, but just for that morning they couldnt blast any more rock out of the earth and i think theres a long term battle and a short term battle, and people are always saying here yeah but you cant win can you? and maybe, maybe, we cant actually stop them from destroying this meadow, but then i dont the council are going to lease off any more of ac , they are not going to be able to extend this quarry any further, im sure of that, and thats a victory, cos next theyll be wanting this bit [the rest of top field], theyll be wanting abit of the woods...so i think it does work...and thats why i feel that ive got to do something and it might not be completely effective but its the only thing i can do.

*no more travelling then?*

no way! im not going to get on a plane again. i used to go off every summer on a long haul flight! for fucks sake i think, you were destroying the planet! i used to care about the planet, and i saw such beautiful places, and i think thats one of the main reasons which have made me determined to fight for all the beautiful places that there are on the planet, cos thats what is being destroyed, purely for profit.

*can i rant abit more?*

my grandmas always saying, youve got a good brain, you should be doing this that and the other and if your intelligent or whatever and do well at school and go to university you end up in this quote unquote 'good job' perpetuating the system, and i think the finest brains are being coopted into perpetuating things that are going wrong, and i think the best way i can use it [my intelligence] is pointing out how theyre doing it wrong, and why i think it should be changed. my grandma went, 'dont you think you should be contributing something to society' and i was thinking 'how many jobs contribute anything to society?' you sell petrol, you sell tobacco, you sell alcohol (although i quite like alcohol) but i dont think the people selling it are contributing that much to society, it kills people! cars kill people! building roads kill people! so the jobs dont contribute anything, and my gran says well you should pay taxes, and well, you pay taxes to fund the policies that are killing the planet.



People have come here and said, like that native american woman [lols] and she just went, ' I cant believe how oppressed you people are, and how controlled you are!' and that gives you a shock, cos you do live under the illusion that you live in a free country, so when someone comes up to you and says, 'youre so impressed' you think...'yeah we are!' the cja and stuff like that, and the way its being used, and the way MI5 are watching environmental protesters and calling you a terrorist because you are against the state beacuse the state is doing something wrong [that terrorist stuff! ira etc, 'yeah its scarey isnt it' - this would be good for an audio clip in a lecture] yeah, the people at birmingham [the relief road] their camps were raided before the G8 summit under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and its like, 'Why?' has anyone on a camp ever thrown a bomb at anybody? y'no? there are people who are totally destroying the planet and thats the state and youre a terrorist if you oppose it. I think 'what better way could I use my life than by opposing it?' I dont really want to spend it all in prison (haha) but...

Interviewee: 'Anne', citizen of *Craggy Island*.

Location: Wildflower meadow, Ashton Court. Time: September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1998.

*we were talking:*

...young people get involved in camps, dont realise burn out etc, what it takes out of you, next step , when realise this, is to start changing the law etc {thats what worked at ac the most at the beginning, functionally wise] can only do so many camps, when you lose, lose, lose enthusiasm etc, need networks of support etc cos when push comes to shove, you lose if your criteria is to save that environment, need others, but its hard to bear that in mind, hence --> e team garry damaged, can travel from place to place, no affiliation to camps, get all the perks, none of the downsides...

...decision on arrest - if no, then, what can I DO? what can I take further, all I can do is stay where I am, the only progression for this site is arrest, in the context of my life, there are loads of ways in which I can take this further...so I've kind of lost enthusiasm for the site, cos theres little MORE I can do than what I'm doing now

you forget all the stuff that you've achieved, and you've done loads, achieved powers to change you life, [need ritual to remember this, to internalise it]

...you only have freedom if you live within the law, and if you step outside it, the force of the law will come down on you very hard, the only freedom you have is whether you want to be arrested or not, whether you're confrontational or not - army type trains this, engrains it in you, whether youre a fighter or not

some people go out to be arrested, to be noticed, to attract attention, exploiting herself etc



arrest - loads of arrests to block up jails, not enough people here for that, only use accountability when arrested

arrest - makes newstories, media will come if they think they'll be arrests, but need to up the ante after a time

need impact, wider scope for journalists - issues wise, why does it interest our readership, not intrinsically if the issue is interesting

violence at solsbury hill - diane there, very confrontational, very hard to maintain

...gmo stuff / simon - got home raided, PC taken etc for taking pictures of gmo action.

charged, have to go to court [all things dropped] making example of freelance journalists

john vidal etc - not allowed to be close to action at manchester where is this stuff!

vital legal observers not allowed there

arrest you for anything, take you off site, ask you every personal question which you probably won't know whether you have to answer or not, they give you a rough experience, know all your info, then they'll discharge you, you will have missed all the demo etc and probably may not want to go back and get involved again cos of that experience [just have to give A name and A address, but some get harassed into giving blood samples etc, and it won't be removed when your de-arrested].

mendip hills not holes, up for 7 years, got 1 year, probably have to do 6 months, been on bail for 18 months - so arbitrary, may not have been granted bail, so arrest decision is a big one. i mean carrying a penknife can be arrested, if they want to they can use these laws to snuff you out. after RTS confrontation, are people going to come back if it isn't fun, isn't festive, likelihood of arrest, probably not

...having that meeting on the meadow, we could all be done for incitement, we were being filmed, if they wanted to we could all be arrested for that.

guy taking photos, gaurd passing on 'being filmed by a protester' and the guy said no i'm a member of the public, get your facts right' being called a protester - ie terrorist - for taking snapshots of the quarry, will people get involved for that? in light of the above?

you've become fair game for anything they want to do for you!

stupid to get arrested for the sake of it - diane

not enough people up at site ever - could have never had saved the meadow, but it was there for publicity (more foe than ef - bee about its for their visibility to make money)

realistic that it couldn't succeed, but everything else was tried and didn't work, nothing else to try, and people were willing to do it...almost by default

perhaps not a preferred tactic - but that's what the people of Bristol are like, friends of ac / foe etc, and only tapped into the solsbury hill sentiment when everything else tried.



police waiting for money go ahead from whitehall to go an round up people and arrest, ditto  
london cja riots, also in bristol rts...

some like margaret arrest junkies, not a difference, a nulance

most of the stuff thats effective is the invisible things,



**Appendix VI. The environmental sustainability of action camps: some EDA perspectives.**

Activists comment on the physical sustainability in the following ways;

**'I have lived at one of the A30 Fairmile road protest camps for almost two years and feel that I really must respond to David Herdson's letter. Apparently, 'a bypass built today is far more environment friendly' than our camps, with their treehouses, tunnels, lock-on points and underground toilet facilities. Our tree houses are lashed, never nailed to the trees. All the branches are protected with matting or thick carpet. Most of the lock-ons are set into the stumps of the already felled trees, and no tunnels have been dug near tree roots or badger setts.**

**Mr Herdson could never understand the loving, respectful relationship that we have with Fairmile's trees, unless he lived in them through the seasons as we have. If this, one of the UK's first privately funded road schemes, goes ahead, thousands of trees and ancient hedgerows will be lost forever. Relocation of badgers has already led to at least 8 adult road deaths. Massive amounts of aggregate will be provided from open cast mining. Finally, the road will generate more traffic, ribbon development, accidents and pollution. Is this comparable to a few compost loos and tree-houses?'**

**Alice troll, at the A30 action**

**'I live in a tree house on the proposed new A30 and would like to point out a few facts that David Herdson missed. In reference to us scaring off wildlife, of the 14 badger setts on the bypass route, only the one next to our camp remains. Also, birds still nest around us - wagtails, chaffinches, treecreepers and robins, to name but a few. I have seen deer walking under the tree I live in, badgers foraging, stoats playing and a barn owl perch nearby. What could have been the same owl, I later found dead by the existing A30, hit by a passing vehicle. Mice have moved into our tree-houses, which we think might be dormice as they have distinctive fluffy tails.**

**We are aware that our camps do have some impact, but we are trying to keep it to a minimum. The idea that a road would be good for the environment is ludicrous. Roads are, in effect, oil slicks on land, being made of much the same chemicals. They are slowly bleeding dioxins into the land and water, not forgetting further pollution from tyre abrasions and exhaust fumes. Anyone who says that roads are good for the environment is, to say the least, poorly informed. Perhaps my Herdson should visit our camps before making assumptions from faraway Lancashire'.**

**Nicky Skin, at the A30 action**

**(Both letters from BBC Wildlife Magazine, February, 1997)**

From my experience at Ashton Court, it appeared that the action camps had very little long lasting environmental effect. In order to check this supposition, I returned to the sites of the camps at periodic intervals after they were vacated in January 1999. By Easter of that year, one could not have been certain where in fact the camps had been, such was the way in which they had returned to their plagio-climatic state.

During the lifetime of the camps, activists at Ashton Court responded to criticism on their environmental sustainability in the following way:



## SOAPBOX: Quarry protestors

**A** RECENT correspondent to Open Lines (November 24: "Campaigners are turning woods into an open sewer") made a number of accusations against members of the anti-quarry camp at Ashton Court.

While it is true that quarrying has taken place in the area for centuries, it has been on a smaller, more human scale than the modern, largely robotised methods which exhaust a pit much more quickly, employing only a few workers for a short time.

If employment concerns readers then I would urge them to join the campaign for a tax on quarrying, which would increase the financial viability of aggregate recycling, creating far more jobs — and jobs for life.

With regard to his or her sewerage concerns, we dig "shit-pits" six feet deep and no more than a foot and a half wide for logistical reasons (ie — we have to stand astride them and squat).

After an "offering" has been made, it is covered with ash from the fire pit, which is sterile and prevents smells and fly infestations, even in summer. When the pit is about two feet from ground level it is filled in, covered with rocks so that dogs cannot dig in them and then left, exceptionally fertile.

If toilet paper is blowing around, it is more likely to have been dropped by passers-by, using it as tissue. Those of us who live at the camp regularly collect other people's litter from around the park because we care about our environment.

As for the suggestion that the area is being raped of trees, I can only imagine that the writer has never tried to light a fire with "green" wood. It's too wet — it doesn't burn. Neither do we use rotten wood, which is painfully smokey, or naturally fallen wood, which becomes part of the ground litter.

There are stacks of wood left by the council to season and be sold as firewood or planks — we prefer to use that.

The two campfires are in shallow pits, guarded by rocks. Though there is a fire burning most of the time in winter, this was not the case in the summer and I can assure the correspondent that there has never been an incident close to disaster in the nine months we have spent in the park.

The contention that local people are afraid to use the park borders on ridiculous. We have had a steady stream of visitors since the camp was set up, some of whom have passed by the camp many times and been drawn in by curiosity. Others have read about us and come deliberately to look for us



**WELCOME:** The greeting for visitors to the camp

(including Jude from Casualty). Many have begun conversations with us elsewhere in the park and accompanied us back to the camp.

Most return for more cups of tea and friendly chats. To my knowledge, no one has ever been threatened with anything other than a discussion of their point of view and the only person who has ever spat at anyone was a security guard.

It has most certainly not been proven that Top Park Field lacks rare plants, nor is there any question that it is a rare habitat, especially so close to the city centre. The skylarks which nest on it are a protected species and I fail to see how a sky emptied of their song and a hilltop emptied of all life will be "helping to keep this lovely city looking good."

Nor is there, to my knowledge, (though I may be wrong), any agreement as to whether the field was cultivated during the war years or not.

The letter of complaint about us has been shown and mentioned to us by several of our supporters, some of them quite upset by the accusations against us. I can only suggest that anyone who read the letter and thought badly of us as a result should come up to the camp for a cup of campfire tea and a chat and see what we're really like.

**J Wilding,**  
Ashton Court Quarry Camp



**Appendix VII. EDA-ers' view on the translocation of Top Park Field.**

The activists at Ashton Court composed the following poem in light of the way in which Alaska Environmental translocated the wild flower meadow, and their agreed 'Statement of Good Practice':

On *turf* on the receptor site  
No wheel or digger must alight.

*Soil* brought from Top Park Field  
By no bulldozer must be wheeled.

No machine where it's deployed,  
As a roller may be employed.

Turf lifted screaming from the ground  
In twenty-four hours home must be found.

Only *brown* land, where turf is gone,  
Digger or plant may move upon.

No fuel store may supply  
But Pioneer's own standing nearby.

When turf does drip with floods or rain  
Earth rapists must wait to rape again.

When rain comes down in drenching showers,  
Twenty-five mm in twenty-four hours,  
Digging of land must wholly cease.  
Until earth dries, there will be peace.

When frost breaks soil on Ashton Hill Field,  
Or floods – to nature they must yield.

When moving would damage turf or earth,  
Diggers must slumber in their berth.

Wheel ruts on Ashton Hill Field go deep –  
Digger and tractor must take a sleep.

If blinding snow blankets the land  
Digger and tractor idle must stand.

When protesters make the standards fall  
**NO TURFING WILL BE DONE AT ALL.**

*For a more legalistic formulation of these points, see Durnford Quarry Extension: turf translocation and associated works, method statement (copies available at Craggy Island).*



Appendix VIII. 'Skin shedding' in the third space.

Oscillating between different positions within the third space often involved painful, raw, but often exhilarating experiences that can perhaps be likened to Routledge's lizard metaphor and reptiles' process of skin shedding. I also found it useful to compare this process to Abbey's first experience of white water rafting, as detailed in 'Desert Solitaire' (1975). The following excerpt describes accurately my feelings when I initially entered the spaces of EDA for the first time.

'I can't help thinking that maybe we should make the trip some other time...however, I keep my cowardly doubts to myself, waiting for \_\_\_\_ to speak of them first. I can find no more excuses for delay...I am obliged to go first.

This is my first experience with a rubber boat and I discover at once that a single canoe-type paddle is not appropriate. The shallow drafted almost weightless boat tends to turn in circles, pivoting beneath my seat; in order to make any headway I have to shift the paddle quickly from side to side, an awkward and tiring procedure. Staying clear of the main current, drifting slowly past the shore, I paddle in circles and wait for Ralph to catch up.

He comes alongside. We lash the boats together, side by side, which makes not only for better companionship and ease of conversation but also improves manoeuvrability: Ralph paddles on one side, I on the other, giving us some control over our direction. We paddle our double craft into the current, ship paddles, lean back against the stern seats, which make good backrests and nothing much else, and smoke and talk. My anxieties have vanished and joy, a pleasure almost equivalent to that first entrance - from the outside - into the neck of the womb. We are indeed enjoying a very intimate relation with the river:

Cutting the bloody cord, that's what we feel, the delirious exhilaration of independence, a rebirth in time and into primeval liberty, into freedom in the most simple, literal, primitive meaning of the word, the only meaning that really counts. (My *God*! I'm thinking, what incredible shit we put up with most of our lives - the *domestic* routine (same old wife every night), the stupid and useless and degrading *jobs*, the *insufferable* arrogance of elected officials, the crafty cheating and the slimy advertising of the businessmen, the tedious wars in which we kill our buddies instead of our real enemies back home in the capital, the foul, diseased and *hideous* cities and towns we live in, the constant *petty* tyranny of automatic washers and automobiles and TV machines and telephones-! ah *Christ*, I'm thinking, what *intolerable* garbage and what utterly *useless* crap we bury ourselves in day by day, while patiently enduring at the same time the creeping strangulation of the clean white *collar* and the rich but *modest* four-in-hand garrote!) (Abbey, 1975:153-155).